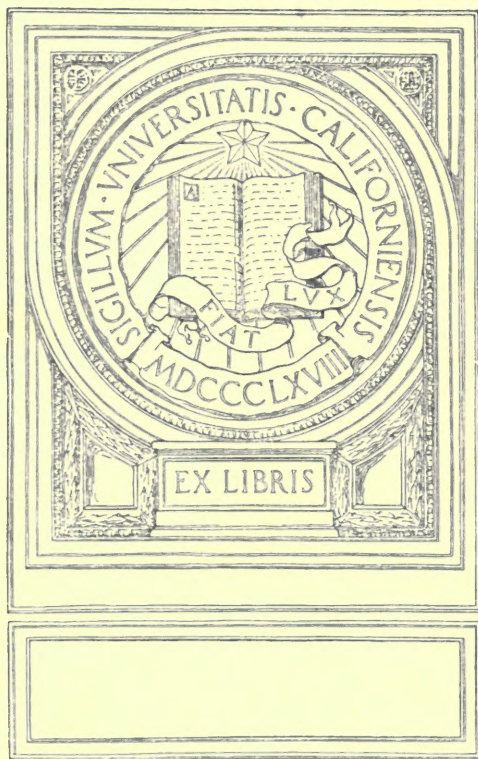






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AN ABRIDGED  
HISTORY OF GREEK LITERATURE





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HISTORY OF GREEK LITERATURE

BY

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## AUTHORS' PREFACE

THIS *Manual* is not a work of erudition. It is addressed especially to students in the secondary schools, and to readers who wish to inform themselves quickly as to the essential facts of Greek literature. All matters of controversy, therefore, all questions of authenticity, all enumerations of obscure names that could interest only the specialist, have been omitted. But within the limits imposed by the needs of the public they had in view, the authors have remained faithful to the spirit that guided them in their earlier work. They have wished to give a continuous account, not a series of detached studies on Greek writers, and so have been led to treat the different authors from the point of view of the historic continuity that binds them one to another. For the principal character in this history is really the literary life of Greece; and its development they have traced from the beginning down to the time when it was overshadowed by the triumph of Christianity.

The great writers of a nation are those who most successfully represent the national genius in the different stages of its evolution, those by whom that evolution is brought about and made manifest. Thus a great writer is at once original and national; yet this duality involves no contradiction. An Æschylus, a Plato, a Demosthenes, may have his individual physiognomy to distinguish him from his rivals and from the obscure crowd of his contemporaries; but even the most original of writers is bound to his time by all the fibres of his being. The language he speaks, the literary form in which he moulds his thought, the very substance of his ideas and opinions, are given him with his birth. Even a writer at issue with his period depends upon it for his antagonist. Tradition furnishes him his problems, because it offers him solutions that he cannot accept, and thereby gives his thinking its direction without asking his consent. Except for the Sophists, Socrates would never have given us the philosophy that he did. Through this dependence of a writer on his environment, his work becomes part of the series of

causes and effects which forms the basis of all evolution. His peculiarities may be traceable to mere accident, to things of chance, or may, at least, be so considered from the point of view of literary history. For the definite causes of these peculiarities elude us and do not come within our sphere. But in evolution as a whole there is no place for accident. A sort of inherent logic in the evolutionary process brings an age of reflection to succeed an age of poesy, and causes the different literary forms to grow distinct. There is a natural and necessary rhythm of destiny by which opposing tendencies and opposing efforts call each other into being. To detach an individual from the collective, nameless background against which he rests is to make his personality unintelligible. So in order to interpret an author, one must continually bring him back to his environment. His personal originality, far from seeming less, comes thus to show its character more clearly. Our artistic pleasure in him, too, becomes keener; for in the voice of the individual we hear resounding the dim harmonies that determine its inherent quality and richness. In short, if pleasure becomes noble when we perceive its cause, we ennoble it further as we make it more intelligible. Such is the conception of literary history that has directed us in the writing of this *Manual*, as well as in our *History of Greek Literature*.

The same idea of the nature of history has led us, in our account of the literary activity of Greece, to devote some space to Christian writers. Hellenism, in fact, existed side by side with Christianity for three centuries before disappearing to make room for the new religion. Hence the gradual modification which is an integral part of its history. One can understand neither the last pagan nor the first Christian writers if one separates arbitrarily the two currents that ran so long beside each other and eventually merged.

This volume, already burdened with material, would have become much too bulky had we yielded to the temptation to treat the different writers by giving considerable extracts from their works; and so we have had to deprive ourselves of the pleasure of making it an anthology. In general, we have employed citations only as they were necessary for the proof of statements. If we have occasionally broken this rule, we have done so to favor certain writers whose works are not so easily accessible as those properly called classic.

We often hear it repeated that Greek is on the decline as an element of secondary education. The statement is far from proved. There has really been no epoch when artists, poets, and people of culture in general were so acutely sensible as now of the beauty of Greek art in all its forms; and our object will be fully attained if we help in some measure to increase among the youth of our schools and among the public an intelligent appreciation of Greek thinking,—the most graceful and untrammelled that the world has ever known.





1408. 2. 40. 1320

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE good name enjoyed in Europe and in this country by the five volumes of MM. A. and M. Croiset's *Histoire de la littérature grecque*, and the demand of English students for a concise, well-written, scholarly manual on the subject, trustworthy in criticism, and free from extraneous matter, constitute a sufficient reason for translating the abridgment of that work which the authors published in the year 1900. It is hoped that the new volume may contribute in this country to the extension of popular acquaintance with that splendid literature whose beauties are so universally known even among the middle classes on the other side of the Atlantic.

The innate quality of dignified French style is brilliance; while that of even the most polished English style is majesty. The difference is fundamental, extending not simply to the dress, but to the cast, the substance, the form and features of the thought. It makes the literature of either people seem less attractive to the other than its own. Hence a translator cannot rest content with having expressed the thought of the original in the idiom of his own tongue. His work yet needs completion. The original literary finish, even if it could be reproduced, would seem unnatural and foreign. The translation must be given a new dress. How well the principle has been remembered the public must be left to judge; but its enunciation will show that it has not been wholly overlooked. The numerous, though delicate, changes made, spring from no thought of casting reflection on the authors' style, which is universally commended, but from the desire of rendering the translation acceptable to the new public to which it is addressed.

A series of more radical changes has given a different general character to the references in the foot-notes. Of course an English work cannot aim to refer largely to articles easily accessible in French. Many references have been dropped, accordingly, and their places taken, if at all, by references to works in English and German. Our classical students are coming more and more to read

both German and French; and it is felt that their needs should dictate the selection of the references.

The translator heartily invites additions to the number of references that have been given; and in general any suggestions looking to the improvement of the work. His thanks are due to numerous American scholars for their generous encouragement and counsel; to the authors for the reading of the manuscript before it went to press; and to Mr. Shirley W. Smith, formerly instructor in English at the University of Michigan, for the wholesome, careful suggestions in matters of style which he has so kindly tendered from the beginning.

G. F. H.

WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN, March, 1904.



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# GREEK LITERATURE

## CHAPTER I

### ORIGINS<sup>1</sup>

1. The Race : its Origin and Formation. 2. First Creations of Greek Genius. Legendary Traditions ; Thracian Minstrels, Orpheus, Musæus, etc. ; Delian Poetry, Olen ; Early Hymns. 3. Historic Indications of a Primitive Poetry. 4. Most Ancient Forms of Narrative Poetry. 5. Other Forms of Poetry. Beginnings of Lyric Song.

**1. The Race : its Origin and Formation.**—The Hellenic race belongs to the great Aryan family, and it forms, together with the Italian race, a distinct group, characterized by two things : a close affinity of idioms and similar fundamental religious conceptions.

How and when was this race established on Greek soil ? What have been the phases of its development there ? By what course has its original character little by little extricated itself from barbarism ? Upon all these points we lack precise and trustworthy information. Yet, by combining the oral traditions preserved among the Greeks with the revelations of archæology and the evidences furnished by Egyptian monuments or by the Bible, we arrive at an opinion that is almost a certainty.

The race from which the Greeks of history sprang appears between the twentieth and fifteenth centuries, scattered in tribes of various names, on the coast of Asia Minor, in the islands of the Ægean Sea, in Thrace, Macedonia, and the Hellenic Peninsula. Apparently that race came from the Orient and gained possession of these territories little by little, now by land and now by sea. Although tradition would seem to unite the tribes under the common term of Pelasgi,

<sup>1</sup> For a general account of the Greek race, its origins and its migrations, we refer merely to the more recent histories of Greece, particularly those of Beloch, Busolt, Pöhlmann, and Holm. On the dialects consult R. Meister, *Die griechischen Dialekte* ; and Smyth, *Sounds and Inflections of the Greek Dialects*. The older histories of Grote and Curtius are still worthy of the most careful attention.



we can be sure that they do not constitute one people. For the only bond between them was that of a common origin and language. But even this community allowed some obvious differences among the various groups — differences which were to be felt more and more as each tribe developed under its own peculiar conditions. For, varying with differences of locality, there were agricultural tribes, warlike tribes, mountaineers, seamen, shepherds, and hunters. The Pelasgic period, then, was one of confused elaboration, during which the future Greek race seems to have lived, if one may so put it, in an inorganic state.

From about the fifteenth century until the twelfth, however, one sees rising from this obscure background, probably under the influence of Egypt, Phœnicia, Assyria, and Phrygia, certain groups of peoples with more distinctly marked characters. Each is already assuming its historic individuality. One may call the period pre-Hellenic, since it comes between the Pelasgic age and that which we call Hellenic. The groups of Asia, under the names of Dardanians, Lycians, Carians, and Leleges, come to be more Asiatic; while those in the islands and in Greece proper, especially on the eastern shore, begin to take on an Ionic aspect. These latter, though somewhat inclined toward the Orient, are separate from it, and they are open to receive from elsewhere and to cultivate at home the precious elements of civilization. In certain quarters, communities of warriors and strong and energetic royal houses soon spring up among them. Thus in Phthiotis and the Peloponnesus we find the Achaean dynasties; in Crete, the power of Minos; in Bœotia, the Minyan principalities. There follows a period of three or four centuries of heroic life, great enterprises, and wars; and also of intellectual, religious, economic, and social development. During these centuries, the material is gathering for the poetry of later days. This is the age of the Argonauts, the Theban expeditions, Troy, Heracles, Theseus, and the houses of Pelops and Labdacus. Events and names are idealized into greatness. At the present time we know them only through legend; yet we feel that behind these legends teemed an activity like a thunder-storm.

Toward the twelfth century, again, there were important movements among these pre-Hellenic tribes, and then began the real period of Hellenization. That period continued till about the middle of the eighth century, when the era of the Olympiads began. Thus, though there was no destruction of the original distinctions, a Hellenic unity was formed: the Greeks became really one people. For instance, the settlement of the Dorians in the Peloponnesus led to the formation of a certain number of regular states, with laws for the govern-

ment of society, and a firmly established power. In self-defence, the neighboring tribes organized themselves more thoroughly. Attica, in particular, became a state, and its Ionic character appeared in strong contrast with the Doric character of Sparta. Many of the old inhabitants of Greece proper, driven from their homes in the course of these invasions, established themselves on the shores of Asia, where long before peoples of the same origin had settled. Here there sprang up a sort of new Greece, even more active and enterprising than the old. But while all these changes were going on, the original affinities, as they gave direction to the currents of migration and the forming of alliances, assumed more and more importance. The Dorians and Ionians appeared, henceforth, as rival groups, each with its own character. The former were more attached to tradition, better disciplined, more austere, and more self-centred; the latter more changeable, fonder of personal freedom, given to innovations, and open to influences from without. As for the other tribes, who leagued themselves neither with the Dorians nor with the Ionians, usage tends to group them under the name of *Æolians*. This artificial grouping brings the different elements together, though only by opposing the old Pelasgic to the new ethnic unities. Dorians, Ionians, *Æolians*, all, as opposed to the "barbarians" whom they encountered in the march of civilization, became more and more clearly conscious of their likeness of origin. The name of *Hellenes*, used first in the North, and probably introduced into central Greece by the Delphic Amphictyony, became rapidly more popular. And because of its antique religious character it quickly superseded the particular designations that divided tribes and states. Little by little it was accepted or was forced into general use. It both attested the national unity and served to promote it. And this national unity was, moreover, sealed by the institution and rapid development of great pre-Hellenic festivals. The commencement of the *Olympiads* marks the time when the Hellenic world consciously entered upon its history.

The race thus formed had perhaps the most refined taste in matters of art ever possessed by a whole people. Alertness, vividness of conceptions, readiness of intelligence, and fondness for argument, were united in them with creative force of imagination, a true appreciation of what is lifelike, and a remarkable instinct for beauty. A happy balance of faculties predisposed them to a love of rhythm. They knew how to use their eyes and ears, to observe, and to keep themselves perpetually in touch with nature. Yet they never lost their poise; on the contrary, their active spirit mastered nature, simplifying, idealizing, appropriating by a systematic procedure, or

imitating with an art that was intelligent and free. With certainty of intuition and admirable self-confidence, this people opened all the highways of human thinking, and created forms of art which seem likely never to be surpassed. The distinguishing characteristic of its literature is that of being at once speculative and artistic. Without in any way disdaining practical utility, they looked instinctively beyond, either to scientific investigation, or to the production of the beautiful.

**2. First Creations of Greek Genius. Legendary Traditions ; Thracian Minstrels, Orpheus, Musæus, etc. ; Delian Poetry, Olen ; Early Hymns.**—The first efforts of the Greek race to hand down orally its thoughts are almost beyond our power to trace. For us the most ancient monument of Hellenic literature is the *Iliad* ; but apparently no part of that goes back beyond the ninth, or at all events the tenth, century. Yet the *Iliad* is the product of an art already well advanced. We must presuppose a long period of evolution of which it is the result. We are safe in saying that the evolution was the work of centuries ; but beyond this, we know nothing. Even in antiquity, when literary history began, men had nothing to say about how literature arose. And so the only thing that can be done to-day, using the facts at our disposal, is to sketch this evolution in rough outline.

Greek tradition represents that in primitive times there lived a certain number of sacred bards, sons of the gods or favorites of the Muses. Such were Orpheus, Linus, Musæus, Pamphus, Eumolpus, and Thamyras. The tales about them were purely legendary, and the works attributed to them were apocryphal compositions, produced many centuries later. Their names seem to be, on the whole, purely fictitious. But whatever the manner in which these names were put into circulation, they served to explain or sanction certain rites ; for almost all of them are connected with the history of Greek religion. They really do not belong to that of literature.

Still, this tradition may not be wholly disregarded ; for it points us to the north of Greece, to Thrace and Pieria, as the home of most of these legendary bards, and the original source of the oldest known hymns. Herein it coincides with other traditions that represent Pieria as the birthplace of the Muses. It is possible to conjecture that from these regions, in times very remote, were brought certain forms of cults that called for religious song.

Other minstrels of like character, more especially devoted to Apollo, such as Olen, Phœbæmon, and Chrysothemis, are represented as coming from the isles of the Ægean Sea, particularly Delos and Crete. The poetry attributed to them derived its first inspiration from Lycia. The best-known of these poets was Olen, who was said

to have come from Lycia to Delos. The Delian women, in the time of Herodotus (fifth century), still sang hymns that he was thought to have composed.

The Greeks of historic times had preserved in these legends a vague memory of some very ancient poetry connected with cults that came from the north and east ; and it was the hymns of these ancient minstrels that the Greeks considered as the prelude to their own epic poems. No idea is more probable in itself. But even setting aside the evidence of the legends, one comes, by the study of known facts, to conclusions very much resembling the accounts therein contained.

**3. Historic Indications of a Primitive Poetry.** — Archæology has by the study of monuments established the fact that plastic arts had flourished in Greece from the pre-Hellenic period. At Orchomenos, Tiryns, Mycenæ, and various other places in Attica, Laconia, and the Islands, there have been found remains of fortified enclosures, foundation walls of palaces, and sepulchres, with a mass of objects in gold, silver, copper, incised stones, colored glass, or terra cotta, which make it possible to reconstruct almost fully the life of the princes of the time. They seem to have loved luxury ; yet it was not, even at that day, a luxury of gaudy ostentation, but was already impressed with a feeling for art. These princes were warriors and hunters. When they celebrated the ceremonies of their religion, or assembled their retainers in the great halls of their palaces, made brilliant with paintings and suits of metal, we cannot suppose that they deprived themselves of the poets that would chant the legends of their gods and sing the glories of their ancestors.

The poems of the Homeric age are based on a whole cycle of myths and heroic tales, which must have been elaborated step by step. The oldest of them show that, at the time of their production, the cycle was well developed. The genealogical relations of the gods and their essential attributes already furnished material for an ample series of traditions. Moreover, the traditions were not connected with the region where the poems were produced, that is, with Asiatic Greece ; but many of them pointed to definite localities in continental Greece. This is a sufficient reason for believing that they came from there and had grown up there. It was in the simple chants accompanying sacrifices that these traditions must have received their earliest form. What is true of the gods is true also of the heroes. Ionic epic poetry is founded on a mythical history that goes back to the Achæan, Minyan, and Cadmæan dynasties, that is to say, to the pre-Hellenic period and to Greece proper ; and from the moment of its appearance it used this history as both well known



and ancient. Thus we are led to believe that at its birth, epic received the heritage of a preceding poetry which had flourished in Greece under the influence of the early dynasties.

The form of the Homeric epic leads, moreover, to the same conclusions. It employs a complex versification, which, before attaining its perfection, must have been rendered flexible by long usage. In addition to this form it employs an immense number of set phrases, which have assumed definite shape even in the earliest examples of Greek epic. This phraseology is used in designating gods and their attributes, describing heroes and their family relations, and narrating the principal events of heroic life, such as combats and assemblies. The most decisive proof, however, is that, though the poems are Ionic, the phraseology is largely *Æolic* in form. Undoubtedly, then, the Homeric epic was brought into Asiatic Greece by the descendants of the Achæans, though given form by their ancestors on Greek soil, in the centuries immediately preceding the migrations.

**4. Most Ancient Forms of Narrative Poetry.**—What has just been said makes it possible to distinguish by their essential differences the various forms of pre-Homeric poetry.

The original source was the hymns or rather the chants in honor of the gods, probably recited during sacrifice. In a time when, as yet, human thinking had not advanced beyond very simple phases, these hymns must have consisted chiefly of enumerations of attributes, outlines of genealogies, short liturgical expressions, and formulas of prayer.

Side by side with the hymns, and probably under their influence, there would begin to be historic legends tracing the origin of princely families and tribes, the genealogy of heroes and their principal exploits, the foundation of cities, and their alliances and wars. These narratives already belonged to epic; but it was a rudimentary, diffuse epic, doubtless without long episodes, pictures, or detailed painting of sentiments, confining itself to a naïve story, and giving no details or amplifications.

But these primitive compositions, whether hymns or narratives, were couched in a language which, by force of circumstances, must have rapidly assumed a semi-conventional character. It may be that poetry was more conservative of ancient forms than everyday conversation; or it may be that it aimed instinctively at being dignified. The poems were all in verse; for verse, of necessity, is the first form of literary art among all peoples. It had been created by the melody and rhythm of the chant, from which, at that time, poetry never was separated. Whatever the precise rules and succes-

sive stages of this poetry, it gave rise to the Homeric hexameter. The chant was accompanied by a stringed instrument of very simple character, which had at first four tones, and later seven. This was the *phorminx* or *cithara*, whose invention was ascribed to Hermes, though sometimes to Apollo.

**5. Other Forms of Poetry. Origins of Lyric Song.** — Besides the heroic, or hieratic, poetry, there is no doubt that popular instinct had led, even in these remote times, to the composition of other chants appropriate to certain circumstances of domestic life. The most ancient epic poetry, for instance, attests the existence of funeral dirges, or threnodies (*θρῆνοι*); nuptial chants, or hymeneals (*ὑμέναιοι*); chants of praise to the gods, or pæans (*παῖνες*); and various kinds of rustic songs in conjunction with the labors of the country. The words of these chants must have been quite simple; for the human mind was still far from knowing how to analyze its feelings. Phrases in repetition were all that it required as a balm for sorrow. The melodies themselves, no doubt, were not all indigenous to Greek soil; perhaps some came from other countries and, on being found acceptable, were accorded popularity. Melodies and chants together constituted an elementary form of poetry that had a character all its own, not narrative like that we have already been discussing. It expressed directly the real sentiments of those who employed it; and the sentiments were collective; that is, common to a group of relatives, friends, brothers in arms, or companions in toil. Really we find here the germ of the future choral lyric.

So, even in prehistoric times, we see in Greece, under the form of hymns, heroic tales, and chants of varied character, a primitive growth of poetry springing up. Its young and vigorous branches were to grow apace; and, though growing together, were to develop separate individualities. The first to come to brilliance was the epic. Let us now examine the process of its growth.

## CHAPTER II

### BEGINNINGS OF HEROIC POETRY

#### HOMER AND THE HOMERIDES

1. Rise of Epic Poetry in Asiatic Greece after the Migrations.
2. Æolic and Ionic Periods. Smyrna and Chios.
3. Homer.
4. The Bards and their Auditors. Epic Recitations.
5. Length of the Epic Recitations. General Account of the Formation of the Great Epics.
6. Transmission of Epic Chants. The Homerides. Duration of the Epic Period.
7. General Characteristics of Epic Art.

**1. Rise of Epic Poetry in Asiatic Greece after the Migrations.** — The event which seems to have brought about a flourishing period of epic poetry in the tenth century B.C. was that series of migrations which had brought to the borders of Asia, in the course of the eleventh century, part of the energetic peoples whom the Dorians had driven from Greece.

Thrust from their native land and still discontented in their new home, these Greeks clung passionately to their traditions, which were for them a reminder of their country. Besides, the very circumstances of their settlement in Asia tended to renew and develop certain of their legends. The Æolians, who were established at Lesbos and in the Troad, were forced to wage war on the peoples who had occupied these countries. The Achæan chiefs who commanded them were in a condition to renew there the exploits which their legends attributed to Agamemnon and his companions. So the old lays which commemorated the exploits of these heroes suddenly assumed an unexpected reality, in that they neglected the past to idealize the events of the day. They served to satisfy and ennoble the sentiments with which men's hearts were filled.

**2. Æolic and Ionic Periods. Smyrna and Chios.** — We see, then, why the epic chant was first cultivated in the Æolic part of Asia Minor. Nowhere else were favorable moral forces so powerful. And, too, the bards, who in Greece proper had been attached to the Achæan princes, must have accompanied them when they emigrated. Thus, if one may use the language of legend, the head and lyre of Orpheus came to Lesbos. Of this Æolic period of epic life, however, we know nothing. The Greek epic, after becoming Ionic,

forgot its origin. But this forgotten origin had, notwithstanding, been indelibly imprinted on it. For in its new form it preserved traces of the dialect which was doubtless used in Greece proper, and which continued in use in Æolic Asia; moreover, its most ancient and beautiful production, the *Iliad*, is, at bottom, an Æolic lay, — since it particularly celebrates the Thessalian Achilles and the ancestors of the chiefs who had led the expedition from Æolis.

Nevertheless it is in Ionic Asia Minor that the epic seems really to have been developed. The language of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is, on the whole, Ionic;<sup>1</sup> the manners, the cast of thought, and the sentiment have an Ionic coloring; in short, important elements of Ionic tradition are intimately associated in the two poems with others of Æolic origin. The only hypothesis explaining this is the admission that the old epic chants, after having seen a rapid and brilliant development in Æolia at the close of the migrations, passed thence into Ionia; and that the Ionic genius adopted them and developed from them the epic properly so called.

This view, moreover, is confirmed indirectly by the ancient traditions, which are almost unanimous in assigning Ionia as the fatherland of Homer, the greatest representative of primitive epic. It is true that they hesitate to decide among several Ionic cities; but for us this is of no importance. The doubt is a superficial matter; for if we disregard merely fanciful conjectures, it is easy to see that tradition points out but two cities, Smyrna and Chios. Now Smyrna, a city of Æolic origin, which afterward became Ionic, is precisely the place for an easy fusion of the Æolic and Ionic elements, the traces of which we have just recognized; and the neighboring island of Chios, inhabited by Ionians, but in constant relation with Æolis, was no less suited to the appropriation by Ionians of an Æolic art.

If Ionia had the privilege of collecting what had been made ready long before, and of giving to Greece the first work in which the real lustre of its genius is shown, she owed the privilege to certain natural advantages. She had the richest lands along the Asiatic coast. The banks of her rivers, her alluvial plains, her sunny declivities, were all easy of cultivation. Then, in spite of the wars with Lydia, the occupation of the country here had cost less blood. She enjoyed, also, unusual luxury and peace; and these favor an art which is to be developed within splendid palaces, amid scenes of

<sup>1</sup> On the language of Homer and its component elements, see particularly the prolegomena of Christ, *Iliadis Carmina*, Leipsic, 1884; Monro, *Homeric Grammar*, Oxford, 1891; and Seymour, *Introduction to the Language and Verse of Homer*, Boston, 1892.



festivity. Above all, the Greeks of the region, because of their relations with Lydia, Phrygia, Phœnicia, and so with the interior of Asia, seem to have been animated by a spirit of innovation and progress; and because of all these advantages their poetry was the gainer.

**3. Homer.**<sup>1</sup>—There is a well-established tradition which attributes the first creation of the epic to one great poet, of whom antiquity almost made a god. That poet was Homer.

He had no history. No one knew exactly the place of his birth or death, nor even the time when he flourished. Several Ionic cities contended for the honor of being his birthplace; others were anxious to believe that they had at least received him as a guest. All this, however, was mere rumor, based on local pretension and arbitrary conjecture. He was represented as a blind singer, who had lived in poverty, wandering from city to city, paying his hosts with poems—here received with favor, there repulsed. The various biographical notices which have come to us about him all date from the period of the Empire. They have preserved, with unimportant losses, the simple legends which were long taught in the Greek schools; but to these no man of sense attributed real historical value. Men believed in the existence of Homer because of the evidence of his immortal works; but no one knew anything certain or definite about him.

Modern criticism, in the face of such vague tradition, could not escape certain doubts. Without entering here upon an involved discussion, we may set forth briefly their foundation. The *Iliad* in its present state appears, as we shall see, to be the result of the successive labors of several poets; but scholars are more and more agreed in the belief that the poem was at least sketched by the most ancient of them, and that he can be considered as its principal author. So then, at the beginning of the poem's evolution, there must have existed a man of genius who, by the incomparable grandeur of his invention, became the father of Greek epic. He was an Ionian, for his work was Ionic. From what is said above, we judge that he composed at Smyrna or at Chios. Smyrna granted him a cult which lasted into historic times; Chios regarded him as the eponymous ancestor of one of her most ancient families. It is not absolutely certain that his name was Homer; for all the old poems were anony-

<sup>1</sup> BIOGRAPHY: The ancient notices are brought together in Westermann, *Vitarum Scriptores*, I-VIII, Brunswick, 1841; and in some of the editions. See also Harpoerion's *Lexicon*, s.v. Ὅμηρος.

Consult Nitzsch, *Monumentum de Historia Homeri*, fasc. II, pars altera, Kiel, 1834; Senzelsch, *Dissertationes Homericae*, I and II, in the Teubner edition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; and also the histories of Greek literature.



mous. It is quite possible that the name was borrowed from some legend or taken from the mythological traditions of some family. That is really unimportant. But if the existence of the poet be established beyond doubt, there is nothing amiss in attributing to him the name by which he has always been recognized.

Homer can have for us no character but that which he imprinted on his work. He was a bard like those described in the *Odyssey*. He received epic traditions from his predecessors and transmitted them to his successors. But upon these he grafted certain elements, wholly personal, whose magnitude we shall consider farther on.

**4. The Bards and their Auditors. Epic Recitations.**<sup>1</sup>—In order to understand what Homer was and under what conditions he composed his works, let us bring before us the status of the bards in general, and the customs of the people whom they addressed.

Their auditors were largely the wealthy people of cities and hamlets. Devoted to agriculture, and later to commerce, even to war when that was needful, the heads of families formed an aristocracy, presided over by kings who were thought to have sprung from the gods. Each one lived on a vast estate, surrounded by his sons, and by servants who were slaves or mercenaries. There he had his apartments, his treasuries, and his storehouses. In his palace there was a stately room properly called the *megaron*. It was the great hall in which the chief took his repast with his household or received his guests. The roof, sustained by pillars, had a central opening for the escape of smoke. Beneath this was a hearth, on which the fire was always burning. There the water was set to boil and the meat was roasted. The simplicity of manners accorded with that of the house. People chatted very little in the sense which we give to the word; for they had few ideas to exchange. Their utterances were short, sententious, and ready formed. On all essential matters, they had the opinions of tradition; and these were never called in question.

They were especially pleased with recitations. Little given to discussion, they had no better occupation for their leisure than that of telling one another what they had seen or heard. The stranger who brought news, or who described things little understood, was welcomed with joy. In default of a stranger, professional story-tellers were in demand, who made it their business to grace the reunions of friends by chanting long recitations.

<sup>1</sup> CONSULT:

Classic texts: *Odyssey*, I, VIII, XXII. On the μέγαρον and the Homeric palace: Buchholz, *Homerische Realien*, II, Leipsic, 1883 (second part); W. Helbig, *Das homerische Epos*, Leipsic, 2d ed., 1887; Perrot and Chipiez, *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité*, vols. VI and VII, Paris, 1894 and 1898.

The bard was precisely such a story-teller. He was endowed with unusual abilities, and had educated himself appropriately for his work. He had been taught by a master, perhaps his father, to play the cithara and to declaim in rhythm in a sonorous and musical voice. He had learned the laws of versification and poetic language, and had inherited a whole series of chants composed by his master or by others. The transmission was probably oral; for it is very doubtful whether the practice of writing was current enough to be employed for the preservation of long narratives. A good bard needed, therefore, an excellent memory. But the store of chants which he had inherited was soon exhausted. The public would consent to listen several times to certain narratives that it admired; but, on the whole, this repetition was exceptional. To please continuously, he must offer his hearers, as much as possible, what was new. He needed, then, in his turn to compose verse narratives like those he had learned from his masters. Thus epic lays were multiplied, as dramas were multiplied later on. Some bards became renowned because the fertility of their genius made them popular. If the master of the house wished to give his guests a brilliant entertainment, he would call in some bard, just as we would call in a well-known actor or singer; and such a bard was, of course, rewarded in proportion to his fame.

Ordinarily it was at the end of the repast, in the *megaron*, that the bard began his narrative. When the guests had eaten and drunk their fill, he arose. All were attentive, anxious for the thrilling stories that they were to enjoy, and ready to grow enthusiastic over heroic scenes. There was a prelude, consisting of a few strains on the cithara, intended to bring the listeners to silence, and to mark the rhythm of the recitation. Then, clear and melodious, his voice rose through the great hall, modulating the verses by the mere effect of rhythm, yet not chanting them. He began with a short prayer addressed to Zeus, or to the god whom the circumstances demanded, and then immediately entered upon the story.

The theme of the story was always an episode from one of the heroic legends (*oi̯my*) then everywhere current. The narrator first outlined, in a few verses, what he meant to rehearse in detail; and to indicate that the story had been inspired by the gods, he prayed the Muse, the goddess of invention and memory, to inspire him with the words he should utter. Then, recalling facts known to all, he set forth briefly the initial situation. After that he could give an almost free rein to his imagination. For upon the basis of tradition, he could, while composing his narrative, construct according to his fancy. Only the great events and the great personages were imposed

upon him; the detail was all his own. If he conformed to the general outlines of tradition, nothing prevented him from making his heroes act and speak as he chose. He invented combats, interviews, disputes, conversations, combinations of scenes, and speeches. Neither he nor his auditors thought of asking whether this were history. If the story was thrilling, if the acts and words seemed true to what was ideal and human, it was freely admitted that things must thus have come to pass. In an age when men seemed to feel in everything a divine suggestion, even in the common doings of human industry, there could be no doubt that stories of such beauty were inspired by the gods. Without distinguishing substance from form, they freely admitted that the gods must have revealed the past to the poet, while inspiring him with the beautiful expressions that charmed their hearts. And so the chants of the bard were listened to with a sort of fervor as being, in a sense, divine. These naïve auditors, thrilled by the tones of the cithara, which at long intervals sustained the declamation, saw with their mind's eye the scenes that were described. A thrill of terror, anger, pity, or admiration came to them at every instant. Sometimes they interrupted the bard with cries, and he was obliged to pause and wait for their noisy acclamations to subside. But soon, excited by the god whom he thought he felt within him, he began again, linking story to story till the hour came when the banquet was to end.

The most striking characteristics of Greek epic, as we shall describe them farther on, are due, almost entirely, to its adaptation to such auditors. It is religious, heroic, aristocratic, like the people for whom it was composed. It reflects their ideas, their sentiments, their tastes. We must note particularly that its very form was determined by the conditions under which it was produced. ✓

**5. Length of Epic Recitations. General Account of the Formation of the Great Epics.** — The bards never composed poems to be read; for, even supposing that they might have used writing at this early period as an aid to memory, — a supposition by no means certain, — their auditors, in any case, did not read. The poems were made to be recited; and the length, at least at first, was necessarily such as was appropriate to recitation.

The first type of the Ionic epic is a lay of moderate length, suitable for an evening's recitation after the repast. To give us a definite idea, we may suppose that between five hundred and a thousand verses would be rendered in that time.

This is the length of the chants in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, or at least of those that form a complete whole. There appears no doubt that the poems of Homer's contemporaries were oftenest of this

length; for the lays mentioned in the *Odyssey* are built upon precisely such a model. Moreover, the great epics that we possess, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, are in themselves evidence of such a method of composition, since they divide easily into a series of episodes of this extent. We have, then, a well-established fact, which must not be lost sight of in trying to understand the formation of the great epics.

Is it, now, probable that the bards passed suddenly from the making of these short poems to poems as long as the *Iliad*? Indeed, inasmuch as there were no readers, it is difficult to conceive why such great poems could have been composed. It has nowhere been shown that public recitations of long continuance belong to the Homeric period, and they seem hardly to fit in with the usages of those times. To explain, then, the existence of these poems, we must find a transitional form that could give rise to them; and this form must be appropriate to the needs of a society devoting but little time to letters. It is, however, easy for us to imagine from circumstantial and presumptive evidence what this form was.

The chants of which we have spoken, relating as they did to one and the same legend, must often have followed one another in logical sequence. A bard, after having recited successfully the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, might be drawn on to show its consequences by telling in succession the defeat of the Achæans, their effort to appease Achilles, the intervention of Patroclus in their favor, and his exploits and death. Thus there would be five or six narratives for recitation, each separate, yet with a thread of connection running through them. If he were called upon to give them, each in a different place and before different audiences, each story could be given by itself. Only a few verses of introduction would be necessary to make the narrative perfectly intelligible. If, on the contrary, the bard recited twice in the same day before the same audience, like Demodocus in the eighth book of the *Odyssey*, he would choose two of these odes in order that his hearers might have the pleasure of meeting the same personages again, and of hearing the "end of the story." Finally, it was possible under certain circumstances that, for some days in succession, the same bard might have the same audience in different wealthy houses of the same city; and then he would recite the whole series of his poems, and so display all the fertility of his genius. A certain grouping of the poems of one author would then be natural and advantageous — but only in case the grouping were loose enough so that afterward the poems could be easily detached.

This sort of grouping it is that probably brought about the for-



mation of the great epics. To understand the process better, we must consider also the way in which the first groups, once constituted, were transmitted from bard to bard and so developed.

**6. Transmission of the Epic Chants. The Homerides. Duration of the Epic Period.**—The chants created by a bard could of course be retouched and added to by him as long as he lived. The most successful ones did not necessarily disappear with their author. Other bards, his heirs or disciples, collected and recited them in their turn. Each of these, likewise, had his successors; and so the sequence continued as long as epic was the form of poetry in vogue. The manner of this succession of the bards was, however, not uniform. Sometimes the art and the tradition passed from a master to a voluntary disciple; but more often, doubtless, from a father to one of his sons, or to a near relative. Ancient evidence seems to establish, in fact, that there were schools of poets. Certain families are cited, within which the heritage of epic was handed down. Such was the family of the Homeridæ at Chios, or that of the Creophylians at Samos. Of course, this does not mean that all members of these families exercised the art; but, among those descended from the same ancestor, it is not surprising that, at a time when hereditary customs still retained full force, there could be found in every generation one or more men devoted to a profession which their fathers had made illustrious. Such a state of things would favor remarkably the preservation and development of great epic compositions.

Under what conditions the transmission of a poetic work was effected, we can now only conjecture. The notion of scrupulous respect for a text as the property of an author seems to have been totally unknown. A poem was preserved only because it pleased the public, and because the bards, by the very necessities of keeping their success constantly in view, found it to their interest to reproduce the poem as often as it was demanded. But meanwhile they found it to their interest also to renew and extend their poems. Just as, at a later period, certain tragic subjects were rehearsed indefinitely and constantly renewed, so at that time favorite epic subjects were dealt with. But a tragedy, once formed, could hardly be lengthened; it needed to be recast in order to be renewed. The groups of epic chants which we have been treating lent themselves, however, by their very nature, to various kinds of development. Nothing was easier than to imagine subordinate scenes based on well-known situations, and to graft them at will upon the original ones. The Lay of Dolon in the eleventh book of the *Iliad* is an obvious example of this sort of creation. In fact, there is no doubt



that most of the primitive epic chants were retouched, extended, and enlarged, throughout the period when epic imagination was in full activity.

This period, as we have said, seems to have begun in Ionia shortly after the immigration of the Greeks, when the first difficulties had been surmounted. That was in the tenth century before our era, approximately 950 B.C. It continued for two or three centuries, until 700 or 650, when the epic period noticeably deteriorated, and the lyric period, more suited to the manners and tastes of the times, took its place. It was in the epic period that the formation of the great works of which we shall say more in the next chapter was achieved.

**7. General Characteristics of Epic Art.**—Before beginning the study of these works, we must indicate certain general characteristics common to all the heroic epics.

The language used by the bards was not that used in the common life of the day, but was conventional. Although the poets and their hearers were Ionians, their language, as we have seen, included Æolic elements. This gave it an archaic color by virtue of which it seemed more noble, more worthy of the heroes and great exploits which it celebrated. For the same reason current phrases were rejected, and replaced freely by rare or antiquated ones. The bards were fond, also, of compound words; and to satisfy this taste, they were constantly creating brilliant and sonorous epithets, that were afterward transmitted from one to another. A certain archaism made itself felt also in their forms of declension and conjugation; for they retained such forms as custom was beginning to abandon, and avoided others that were being introduced. In a word, they were pleased with traditional formulas and pompous phraseology in the manner of the old religious poems. All this gave solemnity to the epic chant, and carried men's imagination far from the reality of the present. We shall see that the poets knew how to unite this solemnity with the qualities that give a poem life.

If we pass from style to composition, we are again confronted with fixed traditions. The epic recitation, planned to while away the hours of leisure, was slow and full of detail. It stopped obligingly for episodes. It feared neither long enumerations nor descriptions of combat, though these now seem monotonous enough. Dialogue as we know it was unknown. When we find the persons speaking, there is no interruption nor rapid exchange of questions and answers. Each of the interlocutors is introduced in turn by some such phrase as: "Then such an one arose and spoke as follows," or "After this hero had thus spoken, such another one replied in these terms."

The poet thus presents to us a series of long or of short discourses, but never a regular conversation. Even in the narrative he proceeds by development of parts. The unity of the whole results from the close connection of these parts, but is, in general, feeble. The progress of the story, when there is any progress, is nearly always without obvious cause. The parts are introduced and closed by formulas, which are repeated several times in the same narrative.

¶The poetic invention itself appears to be as subject to traditional custom as the form of the poems. The constant intervention of the gods is doubtless in agreement with the beliefs of the day; but it constitutes, no less, a means by which the poets could embellish and increase the interest of their lays. Sometimes they represent the gods as coming down to earth, and portray their equipment, their chariots, and their transformations. Sometimes, on the contrary, they carry their auditors to Olympus, and relate as eye-witnesses what is there said and done. Such are the traditional themes, from which the powerful imagination of a Homer brought forth admirable productions, but which could, and in fact did, offer ready resources to poets of less merit. The same is true of the tales of combats, assaults, interviews, and discussions. In all forms of literary composition and in all times, successful inventions soon come to be public property; imitated by all, they finally belong to no one. But in the primitive epic this was perhaps truer than it has ever been since, and more significant, because, in primitive times, less attention was paid to originality.

In fact, one of the most striking characteristics of these poems is their impersonality. The poet never speaks on his own initiative, never thinks himself authorized to give a judgment in his own name, and never lets us know his opinion. The Muse is thought to be speaking through his lips; the poet is nothing more than her interpreter, and this is enough to constitute his grandeur.

Under such conditions, one sees how easily the work of different poets could be combined into the same great whole. Doubtless no man is precisely like any other; and where several men have worked together, each must, though unintentionally, leave some imprint of his personality. But in these epics, such impressions, though we are critically alert to discover them, appear as faint as it is possible in human nature for them to be. And the difficulty to-day in discerning them is, in the absence of accompanying evidence, very great. It is, therefore, almost impossible to trace with precision the different elements of which such poems as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are composed.

## CHAPTER III

### THE *ILIAD* AND THE *ODYSSEY*

1. Special Importance of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.
2. Priority of the *Iliad*. Its Subject. Analysis.
3. General Aspect. Unity and Inconsistencies. Formation.
4. Beauty as a Whole. Extent and Variety. General Harmony.
5. Religious and Heroic Character. Naïve Religious Faith. Gods and Men. The Ideal and the Real. Moral Tone.
6. Form. Speeches, Narrations, and Descriptions. Style and Language.
7. Second Period of Greek Epic. Subject of the *Odyssey*. Analysis.
8. Structure. Unity. Formation.
9. Beauty as a Whole. Extent and Variety. Enhancement of Interest. Slight Monotony of Invention.
10. Religion of the *Odyssey*. The Marvellous Element. Greater Realism of Certain Parts. Some of the Personages. Moral Tone.
11. Form. Style and Language.
12. Conclusions respecting the Two Homeric Poems. The Two Poems and their Time. Their Influence.

**1. Special Importance of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.** — During the period which has just been marked out and characterized, great numbers of poems and groups of poems were certainly produced. And this great production of epic was demanded by the state of men's minds, and favored by the abundance of heroic legends. But of all the works of this time, two only have survived, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It appears, too, that, very early in their history, they eclipsed all the others. This high rank they owed in part to the firmer way in which they were composed and to the beauties of superior invention; but they owed it, too, to the nature of the subject, which allowed two aspects, or phases, of heroic life to be set forth in singularly interesting poems. Yet it would be an illusion to believe that these poems, at the time of their appearance, were everything, and the others nothing. We must admit, on the contrary, that among so many works now lost forever, or forgotten soon after their appearance, some had great merit. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are, then, the products of two or three centuries of poetic composition; and to appreciate them aright, one must think of them as preëminent in a luxurious growth of poetry, from which, in the course of time, they were detached.

Indeed, it is just because they sprang from a broad and profound movement of Greek thought that their part in the literary

history of Greece was so important. They are the earliest works that showed in such remarkable brilliance the characteristic features of Greek genius, while, at the same time, they confirmed and defined these features. We must consider them especially from such a point of view, and endeavor to discover in them the origin of Hellenic literature.

### A.—THE *ILIAD*<sup>1</sup>

**2. Priority of the *Iliad*. Its Subject. Analysis.**—Of the two poems in question, the *Iliad* is undoubtedly the more ancient. Its ideas, manners, and language are so; and it has been imitated in a number of passages of the *Odyssey*.

Its subject is drawn from the Trojan War. We cannot say to-day just how much truth there is in the legend it relates; but beyond doubt there existed in pre-Hellenic times a Dardanian city on the shores of the Hellespont, which was again and again at war with the tribes then living in Greece; and its fortifications, of which, in our day, fortunately, Dr. Schliemann has succeeded in disclosing the remains, were destroyed by a conflagration. All this gave rise to a legend in which the facts were arranged and somewhat exaggerated. We have seen already how much the Æolic emigration must have favored this. In the tenth century, it was the war which furnished the greater number of chants to the Æolic and Ionic bards. The *Iliad* tells us of but a very little part of the war, a single episode; and it constantly alludes to other episodes as if they were already known by all.

The following is, in brief, the content of the poem. In the tenth year of the war a violent quarrel breaks out between Agamemnon, king of Argos and commander of the army, and the young Thessalian chief, Achilles. Agamemnon, in his anger, has taken

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Heyne, *Homeri Carmina*, cum versione Latina et annotatione, 9 vols., Leipsic, 1802–1822; G. Dindorf, *Homeri Carmina*, with a Latin translation, Paris, Didot, 1837; W. Christ, *Iliadis Carmina*, Leipsic, 1884, text edition with important prolegomena; Ameis u. Hentze, *Homeri Ilias*, Leipsic, 1884–1886, 2 vols. of text and 2 vols. of appendices, — a well-annotated edition with discussion of the principal questions in the appendices; G. Dindorf, *Homeri Ilias*, 5th ed., revised by Hentze, Leipsic, Teubner, 1886; Van Leuwen and Da Costa, Leyden, 1897, 4 vols., — a critical edition.

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HOMERIC GRAMMAR: MORFO, *A Grammar of the Homeric Dialect*, Oxford, 1891; Smyth, *Sounds and Inflections of the Greek Dialects*, Oxford, 1894.

TRANSLATIONS: (Verse) Lord Derby, Bryant. (Prose) *Iliad*, by Lang, Leaf, and Myers, London, 1883; *Odyssey*, by Butcher and Lang, London, 1879; and Palmer, Boston, 1891.



from Achilles a captive, Briseis, who has been adjudged to him as a reward of valor. Achilles, somewhat irritated, declares that he will fight no longer. And his mother, the goddess Thetis, whom he implores to avenge him, thereupon obtains from Zeus a promise that he will make the Achæans pay dearly for the injury inflicted on the young hero. Such is the initial situation as set forth in Book I.<sup>1</sup>

Agamemnon then tries to get on without Achilles. And after various incidents that retard the action, he makes ready to begin the combat, in the hope at last of capturing Ilium. But at this juncture, an arrangement, proposed by Hector on the field of battle, is accepted. The issue of the war is to be decided by a duel between Menelaus and Paris, who is also called Alexander. The duel takes place. Paris, overcome, is on the point of perishing, when Aphrodite, his protectress, carries him into the city. While Menelaus seeks in vain to find him, Pandarus, an ally of the Trojans, notwithstanding the truce which had been declared, discharges an arrow at Menelaus and wounds him. A furious battle follows, the first in the poem (Book V and following). On the side of the Achæans, Diomed covers himself with glory. A ruinous defeat now seems imminent for the Trojans; but it is averted. For Hector, who had returned to Troy to bid the women conciliate Athena by prayers and offerings, reappears, after a touching interview with his wife, Andromache, and his son, Astyanax. He suspends hostilities by an individual challenge to the enemy's champions. The challenge is accepted. The lot falls to Ajax, who fights a hand to hand combat with Hector. While they are struggling, night falls and ends the duel, whose only result is the substitution of single combat for the general encounter. An armistice is concluded; the Achæans take advantage of it to bury their dead and to surround their camp with a rampart. The next morning, however, the battle is renewed. It lasts from morning till night (Book VIII), and proves disastrous to the Achæans. Everywhere they are thrust back; and that evening, the conquering Trojans camp in the plain near the rampart.

This closes what may be called the first part of the poem. After many turns and hesitations, the promise of Zeus has been fulfilled, inasmuch as the Achæans have suffered for their injury to Achilles.

But now the Achæans see their fault. Agamemnon weeps and upbraids himself; and even before daybreak, Odysseus, Ajax, and the aged Phoenix are sent to Achilles to conciliate him. Odysseus addresses to him a touching petition. The hero, however, remains quite unmoved; the embassy has been fruitless (Book IX).

<sup>1</sup> The division into twenty-four books seems not to go back beyond the Alexandrian critic Zenodotus, who lived in the third century B.C.



Dependent again on their own resources, the Achæans next night send two spies, Odysseus and Diomed, to the Trojan camp. And at dawn the struggle begins again. This is the third, and by far the longest, battle of the *Iliad*. The account of it extends from the eleventh to the seventeenth book, although there are numerous digressions. After the defeat of the Achæans and the capture of their rampart, the secret help given by the god Poseidon and the goddess Hera brings about the flight of the Trojans; but Zeus, noticing this, is angry and puts Poseidon to flight. The Trojans, now victorious, rush forward upon the fleet. The Achæans barely escape destruction; whereupon Patroclus, obtaining leave from Achilles, takes part in the combat, and at the head of his Myrmidons drives the Trojans back. The poet tells us of his mighty deeds and death, of the furious combat fought over his body, and finally of the grief of Achilles, who, on the approach of darkness, puts the conquerors to flight by appearing near the rampart and putting forth a shout. This group of events constitutes, as it were, the second part of the poem.

The third and last part of the *Iliad* deals with the return of Achilles to take part in the war, and his vengeance upon Hector, the slayer of Patroclus. Clad in the divine armor that Hephæstus made for him at the request of Thetis (Book XVIII), he then proceeds to fight, after having been reconciled with Agamemnon, who restores Briseis to him (Book XIX). Then the gods themselves mutually defy each other. The battle is renewed. The Trojans flee before Achilles, and falling into confusion, are slaughtered. Their corpses are hurled by Achilles into the river Xanthus, which, in anger, by overflowing its banks and pursuing him with its floods, all but drowns him. Hephæstus, however, undertakes the defence of the hero: the god's fires compel the river to withdraw. Achilles arrives before the gates of Troy. Every one has passed within; Hector alone has dared to brave him before the Scaean Gate. Yet at the sight of Achilles, the valiant Trojan, terror-stricken, takes to flight. Both hurry three times around the walls. At last, the Trojan, deceived by Athena, halts for a struggle. He is slain before the eyes of his parents; and from the top of the wall, Andromache, his wife, sees his corpse dragged along beneath the chariot of the conqueror. The struggle of the two heroes is the subject of the twenty-second book. In the twenty-third, Achilles celebrates the funeral games of Patroclus. In the twenty-fourth, the aged Priam comes at night to reclaim the body of his son; Achilles, in pity, grants his wish; and the poem closes with an account of the funeral ceremonies of the Trojan hero, Hector.

**3. General Aspect. The Unity and the Inconsistencies of the Poem. Manner of its Composition.**<sup>1</sup>— If one follows carefully this long narrative from end to end, it is difficult to escape either of two contrary impressions. One is struck by a certain unity, really deep and intimate, which makes the poem a whole; yet, at every turn, this unity is violated in the details of the work, now by certain digressions which are hard to explain, now by the unlikeness of the different parts. According as one or the other of these impressions has dominated contemporary criticism, the *Iliad* has been attributed entire to a single poet, or regarded as the work of a succession of bards, as a product formed from poems originally distinct. Furthermore, each of these theories may be regarded from various points of view, and thus come to seem really not so different as they appear at first. We need not enter here into the details of the discussions which they have called forth. But to demonstrate what seems true to us, we need to formulate the two contrary impressions, and then sketch roughly the legitimate grounds of each.

The fundamental unity of the *Iliad* is incontestable. It consists essentially in this: the poem does not recount a series of events falling between two dates, after the manner of the annalists, but turns upon a moral situation, the anger of Achilles. It tells us how the anger arose, what its phases and immediate consequences were, and how it was appeased. This is the central, dominating thought. Achilles is not always present, by any means. But he reappears at important moments which are connected with one another by continuity of sentiment. When he is absent, his very absence is one of the chief elements of the situation; things would go otherwise, were he there. It is because he is not there and others are striving to take his place, that the gods are prevailed upon to intervene, and that, in a word, the events are what they are. So the secondary episodes are not merely inserted, but in a way dominated and inspired by the principal one. The parts in which Achilles is an actor, at least the most essential of them, have certain common features—grandeur, pure force, boldness—which would

<sup>1</sup> Consult Wolf, *Prolegomena ad Homerum* (1794), reëdited in 1895 for Calvary and Co., Berlin; Lachmann, *Betrachtungen über Homers Ilias* (1837 and 1841), revised by M. Haupt, Berlin, 1876; Köchly, *Homer und das griechische Epos* (*Zeitschr. f. d. Altertumsu.*, 1848); Nitzsch, *De Historia Homeri*, Hanover, 1830-1837; *Die Sagenpoesie der Griechen*, Leipsic, 1852; Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. II; Baumlein, *Philol.*, vol. VII, pp. 225-238; Volkmann, *Geschichte und Kritik der Wolf'schen Prolegomena zu Homer*, Leipsic, 1874; Bougot, *Étude sur l'Iliade d'Homère*, Paris, 1888; Bonitz, *Ueber der Ursprung der homerischen Gedichte*, 5th ed., Vienna, 1881; W. Christ, *Iliadis Carmina*, Leipsic, 1884, prolegomena; Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Homerische Untersuchungen*, Berlin, 1884; P. Cauer, *Grundfragen der Homerkritik*, Leipsic, 1895.

seem to prove their common origin. Therefore, not to attribute to one and the same poet, whom we have called Homer, at least the dominant conception, from which all the rest was developed, and also the composition of the more important parts, seems impossible.

But the contrary impression, having likewise its force and legitimacy, must be considered in any explanation of the poem's form. Some details are inconsistent with the rest, or else are not brought in well, or even contradict other statements. One may cite as examples: the review held by Agamemnon in the second book; the Catalogue of the Ships, which is quite out of harmony with the poem; the truce formed in the third book to be broken in the fourth; the inconsistencies of the first battle; the ill-justified construction of the rampart; the tameness of the second battle; the loose connection of the embassy, which ill agrees with the first book and with the sixteenth; the digression of the Lay of Dolon; the tedium of the third battle, in the midst of which Patroclus, sent by Achilles for information, forgets his mission; the excessive length of the account of the fourth battle; the commonplaceness of the Conflict of the Gods; the abuse of epic machinery in describing that conflict; and finally the difference of character in the last book. And to these divergencies, which are due to differences in the elements that compose the poem, must be added incongruities of detail in the language and style, in the manner of relating and composing, and sometimes in expressions of taste, ideas, or sentiments. If, then, in spite of these differences, one is determined to attribute the entire work to a single poet, it would be necessary to admit—and this admission is allowed almost universally by the partisans of the opinion—that the poet, so far from composing the *Iliad* at a single effort, following the present order of the parts, made it in a number of successive efforts, beginning with certain of the important episodes, adding others here and there, and as it advanced, constantly recast and retouched the work; and then, after he had finished, it received various additions and interpolations. But, modified to such an extent, the theory loses its distinctive character. For the admission that the poem may have existed during a longer or shorter period in an unfinished condition, as a mere group of disconnected chants, and that such was the form under which it came to popularity, leaves this theory not very dissimilar to the first one mentioned; and so it cannot ask to be considered as essentially different, except we grant it a great number of improbabilities.

Owing to the inherent uncertainties of the case, then, every assertion as to the authorship of the *Iliad* must be weakened by doubts and reservations, and can have, in short, only the value of a

more or less probable hypothesis. That which seems to us most likely, in view of the indications of the poem itself and of general probability, would be something like the following: The talented bard whom we call Homer composed at the beginning the first chant, almost as we have it to-day. It was a detached lay, like others then current. What made it seem original was that, instead of relating a series of events, or describing a military adventure, it represented, with admirable force, a moral situation. This was a fruitful situation, in that it implied certain necessary consequences. In other words, the scene representing the quarrel contained the germ of other scenes, which, perhaps, tradition had already partly developed, but which henceforth drew to itself a keener interest, and so it was natural that this situation should be completed. Homer composed certain scenes into a series of distinct chants, which ordinarily were to be recited separately, but which were connected by belonging to the same legend and by their continuity of idea. These chants, composed at different times and probably not in their present order, did not necessarily agree in all details, because the poet treated each scene for its own sake merely, and according to the inspiration of the moment. But, once made, they constituted a group that formed a complete poem in that it represented from beginning to end a single "action," the development of a moral situation. Thus, in general, was gathered the material which produced the *Iliad*. These primitive chants exist in the completed poem, of which they form, as it were, the framework. But, by a series of successive operations, they were mingled with others, after being retouched or abridged in certain parts. Therefore it is impossible to-day to separate them from the rest, or even to fix upon them with certainty. It appears, however, that the kernel comprised essentially: the Quarrel (Book I); the Defeat of the Achæans (Book XI); the Embassy (Book IX), greatly altered, however; the Intervention and Death of Patroclus (Book XVI); and the Combat of Achilles and Hector (Book XXII).

- Of course the primitive chants do not correspond exactly with the present books. They may have been longer or shorter, and it is useless to attempt to-day to find the beginning and closing verses of the chants beneath the layers of casual poetry with which they have been covered.

But apart from these chants, Homer may have composed others relating to the war with Troy, and especially to what the Achæans did in the absence of Achilles. Recommending themselves by the same beauties as distinguished the preceding chants and being sung by the same school of bards, they must have tended to become incorporated with the group treating of the Anger of Achilles. And



this incorporation was doubtless one of the main causes contributing to augment the group. The *Iliad* may, therefore, have in it, besides the lays already mentioned, some others emanating from the poet Homer.

Yet that which must above everything else have brought the poem to its final form was the emulation of those bards who devoted themselves to it for centuries. To retain the favor of the public, they needed continually to renew this fund of poetry. In order to inspire or prolong interest, it was necessary that they should put the parts already known and always called for into some new setting. Thus the primitive chants became like so many centres of crystallization about which, little by little, epic material would gather. Later on, certain of the new chants played the same rôle in turn. One can but feel, for instance, that in the *Iliad* as we have it now, the eighth book and the tenth were formed around the ninth, which served them as a centre; and that the intervention of Poseidon in the thirteenth, and that of Hera in the fifteenth, are variations of the same story, which was inserted to retard the action of the attack upon the fleet. And owing to such successive additions the primitive group was gradually transformed into a long and complex series, whose parts, however loosely joined, retained a fundamental unity, because that unity belonged to the original material. The practice of the rhapsodists of giving lengthy recitations at certain festivals promoted this spontaneous work of organization.

In such form the *Iliad* must have been transmitted down to the sixth century. In the main it had been composed; but it still needed to undergo complete revision. At this time it received in Athens, under the influence of Solon and Pisistratus, a generous welcome, of which we shall have more to say later (see p. 53). It was made part of the programme of certain festivals and subjected to their ordinances. With a characteristic sense of order and harmony, the splendid city no longer allowed the rhapsodists to present isolated chants, but compelled them to recite the lays of the *Iliad* in the order of the occurrences, so that the successive recitations should manifest a continuous development. This does not mean, as some have said, that at the yearly Panathenæa, the poem was necessarily recited in its entirety: but simply that, thenceforward, the portions recited followed one another in a settled order. The very establishment of this order necessarily brought into relief certain lacunæ, incoherences, and instances of double usage never before perceived. It was necessary to submit the whole poem to a revision that would remove these blemishes. The different portions were, at the dictation of the rhapsodists, reduced to writing in their natural order,



the incoherencies were smoothed out, contradictory passages or incongruous parts were slightly weakened or modified, and in this way was constituted, for the first time, a complete and well-organized text. This text, with certain corrections of petty detail due to the grammarians of the ages following, has been transmitted to our own days.

**4. Beauty as a Whole. Extent and Variety. General Harmony. —**

As it stands to-day, the *Iliad* as a whole possesses a beauty that is due to the unity of the poem — a charm quite apart from the superior excellences of certain passages. If one considers the whole poem, the chief episodes easily link themselves to one another, and group themselves together, as it were, for the production of a short, strong action. So, despite the tediousness of certain parts, the whole has a simplicity and balance that are truly Greek. Its unity, moreover, is neither crude nor abstract. It is difficult of comprehension in a single formula; for the poem first brings before us the anger of Achilles against the Achæans, and then shows how that anger is turned against the Trojans. Hence the unity, though not consistent from a logical point of view, is flexible and lifelike. It is that of the heart of its hero; it is unconcerned about both the causes and the object of his anger, yet not about the anger itself. The *Iliad*, in its essential theme, is the picture of an outburst of passion, which overcame the spirit of the greatest hero celebrated by poetic fancy.

The story, too, constantly goes beyond the limits of this theme. The name of the poem is sufficient indication of the part in its development played by the Trojan War. There is, doubtless, a superabundance and, occasionally, some disproportion of the parts. Stories of combat are multiplied to excess. They seem long to us, and probably appeared so to the Greeks themselves, after the *Iliad* had been made into a whole, and especially after the reading of it became common. This undeniable fault is due to the manner of its composition. It is the result of the successive additions that made the poem what it is. But these very additions contributed not a little to give the poem its national popularity; for, owing to the descriptions of combats, it forms a complete representation of the military customs of primitive Greece. It could be considered an abridged history of the war with Troy, and as such it was given a unique place among the monuments of the past. From the point of view of art, the neglect of the original theme in parts of the *Iliad* is not without compensation. One of the charms of the poem is its variety: and this would have been impossible except for the freedom of its composition. Amid scenes of military fury and massacre.

the eye rests upon pictures of a quite different nature: the tumultuous assembly of the second book; the review of Agamemnon; Helen on the rampart; the visit of Hector to Hecuba, Helen, and Andromache; the arrival of the chariot of Poseidon from across the sea; the enforced sleep of Zeus on Mount Ida; his awakening and his anger; the conversation of Patroclus and Achilles; the latter's sorrow; the welding of his wonderful arms; the overflowing of the Xanthus; the funeral games in honor of Patroclus; the supplication of the aged Priam at the feet of his enemy. Thus, on a background uniformly sombre, poetic fancy has woven a whole succession of episodes, continually renewing the reader's interest and winning his attention.

The episodes differ in tone as well as in subject; and if one looks closer, in manner also. But these dissimilarities are in the end fused into a pleasing harmony which satisfies the taste. This harmony may be explained by the fact that the separate parts are, after all, born of the same artistic tradition, and so one is inclined to think oftener of their common likeness than of their differences. Epic art, as we have sketched it in rough outline, — the art whose characteristics we shall now try to set forth as they are represented in the *Iliad*, — saw the twilight of its evening early, in proportion as lyric and dramatic poetry developed. In this twilight, it took on a deeper tinge of uniformity and a fundamental harmony. In the distance, slight tints are lost sight of and only pronounced colors strike the eye.

**5. Religious and Heroic Character. Naïve Religious Faith. Gods and Men. The Ideal and the Real. Moral Tone.**<sup>1</sup> — One of the things in the *Iliad* which strikes the modern reader at the outset is the important part which the gods take in the action. They are everywhere present. The poet does not conceive any event of importance except as brought about by the will of some god, and as having its counterpart in the celestial world. In this respect, his work is deeply religious, for it implies a naïve faith in higher powers who encompass the whole of human life, stirring the depths of man's heart and determining his actions as they will. Mortal men in the *Iliad* are ephemeral and feeble beings, doomed to suffering and death, without force of character and without hope of success, except through the help of their divine protectors.

<sup>1</sup> Consult Nägelsbach, *Die homerische Theologie*, Nuremberg, 1840; J. Girard, *Le Sentiment religieux en Grèce*, Paris, Hachette, 1869 (2d ed., 1879); Gladstone, *Juventus Mundi*, London, 1869; Buchholz, *Homerische Religion*, *sup. cit.* III, part 1; P. Cauer, *Grundfragen*, etc., *sup. cit.*; R. C. Jebb, *Introduction to Homer*, London and New York, 1892; Walter Leaf, *A Companion to the Iliad*, London and New York, 1892.

Yet the poem, so full of faith and respect for the gods, aims not at any theological purpose. There is never the slightest attempt to clarify popular notions about religious matters. The gods are depicted as eminently beautiful and happy, yet as violent, passionate, often unjust, and even false. They are exempt from death, but not from suffering; for they are liable to wounds and punishment. Divided into two camps, they have their favorites, quarrel, threaten one another, and even fight. Jealousy, hatred, cunning, and bad faith are frequent motives with them. Those that are powerful terrify the others. Some of the goddesses have masculine hearts; while others are timid, and weep and tremble. Zeus, as sovereign of Olympus, rules them through fear. The others dread him and yet deceive him on occasion. The supreme pleasure of these immortals is that of banqueting in their celestial palace. They are, on the whole, rather coarse, even inferior to the heroes in moral worth, but mighty and formidable, and excellent as epic personages by reason of their grandeur and their passions. To us, all this seems, and really is, very naïve. Such a religious faith belongs to minds which philosophic reflection has not yet touched and in which first impressions are accepted without question. The men of the times, poets and people, in many ways seem like overgrown children. Yet one of the merits of this poetry is that it reveals to us so clearly an ancient state of society. There is no more theology in the general plan than in the painting of details. Except for now and then a sombre reflection about human destiny, the poet offers no opinion concerning the general march of events. He raises no religious problem. He utters no word of curiosity about the supernatural. His religion, of course, is everywhere present; but incidents are not related to demonstrate its truth. The poet's interest is human throughout, however great the part the gods have in the story.

To show truthfully what the renown, courage, strength, sufferings, and passions of the heroes have brought about, that is his unique purpose. He is by vocation the interpreter of heroic life. What we must see in his picture above all is the happily proportioned mixture of the real with the ideal which was ever the supreme desire of Greek genius.

The heroes of the *Iliad* are human to the profoundest depths of their nature — true, however, not to a conventional humanity, but to that of their time, which, in its essential elements, is like our own, except that it is more artless. They have our passions, petty and noble, our weaknesses and our miseries; but they are less adroit than we in concealing them. They are now generous and now selfish; at times, their only thought is for the public weal, honor,

and duty; then, again, they are wholly occupied with themselves. They have moments of fitfulness that are absolutely true to nature. Their impetuous bravery, their love of combat, their wish to make themselves illustrious, are natural; but these qualities do not free them from the dread of death and suffering, nor from occasional moments of terror. The affections that sway the human heart, whether noble or commonplace, appear in them with as much power as sublimity. They love their native land, their parents and children, and all the companions of their daily life, with tenderness; they love, too, honor and riches, good fortune and pleasure. In a word, they are men in the completest sense of the term. No poem offers a greater variety of natural sentiment than the *Iliad*. The wholeheartedness of all the personages is admirable.

The psychology of the characters is not, as a rule, complex. The human heart, indeed, has never been quite simple; and if poetry, even the most primitive, were to represent men as alike in disposition, it would lose all semblance of truth. But the men of the *Iliad* are at least relatively simple, and this is the reason why they make impressions on us. Their impulses are strong, their motives not numerous, their deliberations brief and quickly developed in action, with seldom a scruple or anxious hesitation. Herein the moral painting of the poem is rather primitive; yet though the simplicity is sometimes childlike, it gives proof of depth and force of thinking. The sentiments, though not complex, come from the bottom of the heart, wholly filling it. For the very reason that they are not complicated, they appeal frankly to our sympathies with the artless cry of nature.

Such, in this ingenuous poetry, is the part of realism. It is important, as it furnishes invention with its material; yet the result obtained is due to a keen sense of the ideal.

The description of the characters of the *Iliad* is ideal in two respects. By the elimination of minute details, Homeric art summarily paints moral character, as well as physical appearance. Almost all the personages have some characteristic trait; for example, the youthful fire of Achilles, the wisdom of Nestor, the royal majesty of Agamemnon, the constancy of Ajax, the impatient valor of Diomed, the faithful and determined firmness of Odysseus. And this character, defined by traditional epithets often repeated, is brought into just so much more striking relief because it is less obscured by subsidiary traits. This very fact raises the personages above mere vulgar reality. Each one is distinguished from the throng by something that ennoble him. But this nobleness is due particularly to another cause, the moral worth of these legendary



beings. Whatever their faults and weaknesses, they are all of a superior order of humanity. The poet considers them as belonging to times gone by and as inferior only to the gods. Their physique partakes of divine beauty, force, and agility; their moral nature partakes of divine "virtue," ἀρετή, in the primitive sense of the word — an excellence due to qualities eminently manly, like boldness and endurance, and also to reason, force of speech, and a lofty sentiment of honor. They are noble specimens of the Hellenic type. They all have a liberty of action, which is the more admirable, since it is prudent and capable of moderation when circumstances require.

And so out of this fact rises the moral tone of the poem. The Greeks of later centuries felt that moral tone keenly; indeed, they made too much of it — especially the philosophers — by attributing to the bards designs of instruction quite foreign to their thought. Homer certainly never intended to teach lessons, yet his poem unconsciously does so, merely because it is at once real and ideal. It is, in heroic form, a striking picture of humanity, and therefore a continuous series of scenes of warning and admonition. These not only provoke reflection, but also, owing to the inspiration animating them, strengthen every generous motive of the human soul.

**6. Form. Speeches, Narrations, and Description. Style and Language.** — Though in form the *Iliad*, like all epic poems, is a long narration, yet the personages are constantly brought before us. They take part in the dialogue and exchange ideas and sentiments. Speeches, then, form an element of the poem almost as important as the narrations and descriptions. We ought, at this point, to study both groups.

The speeches serve, more than the narrations, to portray character. They are of several sorts: speeches of deliberation, held in the assembly or the council; exhortations to war on the field of battle, supplications, intimate addresses to a single person, and finally mere repartee. In the poem, as in the real world, the language is adapted to all the incidents of life and so takes on every variety of color. We can point out here, however, only its general characteristics.

The art of the poem is little more than a reproduction of nature, yet art really is present. The personages do not utter their ideas at random: on the contrary, they well know what words to begin with, and they know how to make men listen — how to win their attention. They set forth their arguments in the order that seems best and in the form most appropriate to gain acceptance from those whom they address. If they have definite conclusions, they formulate them and sum them up in striking terms. All this is the work of reflection,



method, and experience. There was, then, as early as Homer, a sort of rhetoric; and Quintilian was not wholly wrong in praising it. The error to be avoided consists in regarding it as finished art. It was, of course, very elementary — largely matter of instinct. The argumentation, in Homeric speech, is brief and incomplete. It mentions reasons, but oftener than not leaves them undiscussed. It seldom takes account of possible objections, and often foresees none. The pathos is artless and overdrawn, and the speaker does not know how to prolong or continue it, nor how to turn it to account. He stops short as soon as he has said what occupied his thought or burdened his heart. He lacks the power of analysis. He sees things as a whole, and is content with his first impression, which, though well-founded and clear, is not yet capable of analyzing its object.

The real merit of these discourses lies in the fact that it reveals the natures of those who deliver them. In this respect, nearly every one of them is admirable. When Achilles speaks, in the first book, whether to console Calchas and bid him proudly fear nothing from any one; or, already trembling, to complain of Agamemnon to his face, while trying to restrain his anger; or to break out in curses and threats: there is not a phrase, not a word, that does not betray, or express the agitation of his heart. And the same is true of all the great speeches of the *Iliad*. Odysseus, adroit, persuasive, anxious for the public weal, has his whole soul in his speech to Achilles, when he comes to find him in his tent. The reply of the young hero is an outburst of anger, a continuous ebullition of resentment, a cry of wounded pride. Andromache, beseeching Hector to remain in Troy, gets into her petition a note of love and despair, and the most persuasive appeal of feminine tenderness, with the intensity that is her particular strength. Hector, in his response, discloses all his moral grandeur — a compound of sweetness, pity, tenderness, bravery, and honor. Priam, begging the body of his son from Achilles, puts into a few words all that such a situation could suggest to the heart of a royal father. The great beauties of the poem, therefore, lie in its speeches, for these have the eloquence of nature, rendered noble by grief or passion.

In the narrative passages, likewise, the great Homeric quality is life. We have already shown certain general characteristics of epic narration, particularly its traditional language. But we must see, too, that tradition has in no way limited the inventive genius of the poet. For never has the gift of seeing and disclosing the real meaning of things, nor that of animating them and bringing out their leading features, been more clearly evident. A few plain words suffice for complete characterization. The whole twenty-second book, which

shows us Hector and Achilles in their final struggle, is as admirable for its pliant force as for its pathos. At every moment of the action we see the attitude of the combatants, their gestures, their physiognomy; and yet there is no detailed description. The poet needs but a word to make the image clear and strong in our minds. The design, moreover, though only a suggestion, is not sketchy. Our emotions rise with the image. Almost everything in the narrative is touching or passionate. We are captivated by the spectacle that passes before our eye, because the poet, while composing it, poured into it his heart. Without ever bringing himself into view, he consciously fills it with pity, fury, horror, or exultation. The sentiment of the throng is as well known to him as that of the individual. He shows us the assembly or the battle-field, with the glory of victory or the humiliation of defeat. He pictures tumultuous movements, bursts of enthusiasm, moments of bewilderment, transports of joy, and the breathless hurry of escape.

The composition of these narratives, as we have seen, is far removed from any severe method or system. There are prolixities and digressions. It is none the less true, however, that, under a form still primitive, the truest artistic instinct is already present. The episodes follow in natural order; the digressions are neatly managed; the catastrophe is adroitly postponed to prolong attention and hold it in suspense; and often the issue is gradually revealed, and that to expectant minds. One feels, even in the least successful parts of the poem, an organizing genius aiming at clearness and proportion, clever in avoiding confusion and in selecting what has worth. These are properly the qualities, not of an individual, nor of a group, but of a whole race.

The style is, moreover, in harmony with the invention. The best passages of the poem owe to this style their wonderful brilliance. Though determined in its nature and general character by the traditions of epic phraseology, it is free and flexible in detail, and easily adapted to the particular aims of the poet. Its amplitude and pomp, due to the laws of early Greek epic, are found especially in the parts one might call neutral, in the very setting of the narrative, from which the more characteristic scenes detach themselves. Yet the traditionally pompous and verbose style becomes concise and spirited, or simple and tender; now persuasive, now wavering; even harsh and abrupt when it comes to a threat, a prayer, or a lament, an expression of anger, hatred, pride,—in a word, to tracing and imitating the impulses of the human heart. Even in the narratives, the variety is not lessened. Sometimes the movement of the language is slow and majestic. It develops comparisons of astonishing length.—

real accessory descriptions, that mingle pictures of war with those of landscape, with hunting scenes, with boisterous stretches of water, or with promontories beaten by the wind. The poet tarries beside these, apparently forgetting his principal theme for the picture that his imagination has created. He is not troubled about exactness of resemblance nor differences of detail, but seeks by his description to produce a simple, powerful impression; and this impression must aid the story for whose sake the auxiliary account has been inserted. Sometimes, on the other hand, the movement of his style is hurried. The language follows the movements of the actors. It is broken, it rests in suspense; by some sudden leap, it reaches a critical point. He has sweet words and tender formalities for describing the death of a young warrior; the sombre gloom of destiny for those whose promise of life has been in vain; and harshness, groans, and sounds of bitter anguish to express the fury of battle, the clash of arms, or the rumbling of war chariots, hurried along by horses that have lost their driver. This Homeric style demonstrated for Greece the possibilities of suggestion that lie in words, figures, accents, the movement of sentences, and the rhythm of verse. But in the picturesque variety of the *Iliad*, the most striking features are its grandeur and force. All the lyric and tragic poetry of succeeding ages, and even their prose, derived from it lessons whose importance cannot be exaggerated.

## B. — THE ODYSSEY<sup>1</sup>

**7. Second Period of Greek Epic. Subject of the *Odyssey*. Analysis of the Poem.** — If the *Iliad* represents, under an ideal form, the military life of the heroic period, the *Odyssey* depicts, under the same form, a domestic drama, mingled with narratives of travel and marvellous adventure. So it is really the second Greek epic; for it completes the first, yet without equalling it in dramatic power or moral value. In the *Iliad*, the combats are brought into the foreground; and consequently the sentiment of honor, with the simple and superb display of heroic force, bodily and spiritual, is prominent. In the *Odyssey* we see a home and its enemies. On the one side, lust,

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Baumgarten-Crusius, *Homeri Odyssea*, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1822, with a select number of scholia; G. Dindorf, *Homeri Carmina*, Paris, Didot, 1837; A. Pierron, *L'Odysée d'Homère*, 2 vols., with notes and prolegomena, Paris, Hachette, 1875; A. Kirchhoff, *Die homerische Odyssee*, Berlin, 1879, important for the discussions contained in the excursus; Ameis and Hentze, *Homers Odyssee*, 2 vols. of text and 1 vol. of appendices, with good German notes, Leipsic, 1880, often reëdited.

SCHOLIA: G. Dindorf, *Scholia Græca in Odysseam*, 2 vols., Oxford, 1855; the *Commentary* of Eustathius rec. Stallbaum, 2 vols., Leipsic, 1825.

LEXICONS AND GRAMMARS: See note on the *Iliad*, p. 19.

with its brutality and violence; on the other, cunning, confident patience, long dissimulation in the service of right; at the same time, a picture of fancy in the distance, and an abundance of tales and descriptions to amuse the imagination. The Greek mind could find pleasure here in seeing a phase of itself that the *Iliad* had left out. These two epics offered an abridged but complete image of its primitive life.

The subject is drawn from the legend of the "Returns," the sequel of the legend of the war with Troy. The Achæan chiefs, having vanquished Priam and destroyed his city, wished to return to their homes. But the anger of the gods must yet be visited upon them. Some had returned only to fall in fatal ambush; others had perished at sea; and a few had wandered about for a longer or a shorter period. Among the latter, none had suffered more than Odysseus, and the legend of his adventures, probably built upon ancient mythological themes, seems to have been well developed at an early period. That the *Odyssey* might be composed, the hero needed to become the type of the sailor astray, confronted by all the terrors and marvels of unknown regions. The tale of his adventures was increased simultaneously by popular story, by the narratives of sailors, and by poetic invention. The first attempts of the Greeks of Asia to make long voyages doubtless furnished it large contributions. With this principal legend a secondary one was developed concerning Penelope, the wife of Odysseus, who, though courted in his absence by boisterous suitors, remained faithful to her husband. The point of contact of the two legends was the return of the hero, and the slaughter of the suitors. Owing to this combination of diverse elements, there arose, little by little, a group of highly interesting narratives. These we find to-day in the *Odyssey*, as it has come down to us.

The poem begins at Ithaca, in the home of Odysseus.<sup>1</sup> The brutal audacity of the suitors is vividly portrayed. The youth Telemachus, barely out of his teens, offers them but feeble resistance. The goddess Athena, patroness of Odysseus, comes in person in the guise of a stranger, to exhort the youngman to firmness and to advise him to make search for his father. Telemachus then convokes an assembly of the people of Ithaca (Book II), in order to complain of the suitors and to ask that he be furnished with a vessel. The assembly, dominated by the suitors, separates without coming to a decision. But Athena, assuming the guise of Mentor, a friend of Odysseus, procures for Telemachus the needed vessel, equips it, assembles his companions, and sets out with him. Telemachus goes

<sup>1</sup> The division into twenty-four books was made at the same time as that of the *Iliad*. See p. 20, foot-note.



first to Pylos, to the home of Nestor (Book III), then to Sparta, to the home of Menelaus (Book IV). Both give him a most friendly welcome and speak to him of Odysseus, without being able to say exactly where he is.

We then leave Telemachus at Sparta, to find ourselves transported to a distant island, on which the goddess Calypso has detained Odysseus, wishing to make him her spouse. The gods, however, instigated by Athena, have decided that he must be set free. Calypso, receiving their order from Hermes, decides to dismiss him. Odysseus builds a raft and puts to sea. But Poseidon, angry with him ever since he put out the eye of the Cyclops, raises a tempest. Odysseus is tossed upon an unknown shore. The three following books (VI-VIII) picture his reception among the Phæacians, who inhabit that land. Nausicaa, daughter of Alcinous, on the way to wash some clothing in the river near the seashore, comes upon the unfortunate mariner, who is shipwrecked, hungry, and cold. She comforts him, and escorts him almost to the city gates. He enters the palace as a beggar, but is received as a guest. They spread a feast for him and institute games and banquets in his honor. We have in the Phæacians the spectacle of a happy, wealthy people, whose life is wholly one of pleasure.

In reply to the well-meant curiosity of his hosts, Odysseus, betrayed by his tears as he listens to the bard Demodocus chanting an episode of the Trojan War, reveals his identity and tells of his adventures. His story occupies four books (IX-XII). We learn thus all that he suffered from the time of the capture of Troy till his arrival among the Phæacians, — his adventures among the Lotophagi and with the Cyclops, his sojourn in the isle of *Ævæa* with the goddess Circe, his visit to the region of the dead; then the hospitality of *Æolus*, the tempest, his passage along the isle of the Sirens, the terrible voyage between Scylla and Charybdis; his sojourn in *Trinacria* and the slaughter of the oxen of *Helios*, the death of his surviving companions, and his arrival and sojourn in the isle of Calypso. At this point, Odysseus' narrative catches up with the story of the poem as a whole.

The Phæacians, charmed by his story, prepare for his return. Embarking in one of their vessels, he finally lands at Ithaca (Book XIII). Here, with the aid of Athena, he disguises himself in the features and garb of a beggar. As such, he is received by his old servant, the swineherd Eumæus, from whom he learns what has been going on in his palace (Books XIII, XIV). In Book XV we are again at Sparta, where we had left Telemachus at the end of Book IV. Telemachus finally takes leave of Menelaus, and a prosperous



voyage brings him to Ithaca, despite the intrigues of the suitors. He comes to Eumæus in Book XVI and there welcomes the stranger, who, taking him aside, makes known to him who the supposed beggar really is. Father and son, thus reunited, devise their plans together.

In Book XVII, first Telemachus, and then Odysseus, still disguised, come to the palace. The would-be beggar, insulted by Antinous, leader of the rioters, curbs his wrath and plots for his vengeance. Challenged by another beggar, Iros, he wrestles with him and throws him. Nevertheless, he submits to numerous insults without revealing himself (Book XVIII). Penelope, apprised of the situation, is anxious to see him. She has him appear before her and asks him whether he has learned anything concerning Odysseus. He assures her that he has seen him, and that Odysseus must soon return. It is after this tale that the old maid-servant, Euryclea, while washing his feet, suddenly recognizes him by an old scar. Odysseus has only time to bid her remain silent (Book XIX). Vengeance is approaching, though various incidents retard it, notably the arrival of the cowherd Philætiüs, through whom Odysseus makes himself known (Book XX). At last the longed-for moment is at hand. In Book XXI the suitors, at the invitation of Penelope, try to shoot each an arrow from the bow of Odysseus through a series of rings. Not one of them can even bend the bow. Odysseus seizes it and passes the test successfully. It is a moment of intense excitement. He gives a sign to his son and his two faithful servants, who thereupon take their places at his side. Then the massacre of the suitors begins. They all, after a hard fight, succumb to the shots of Odysseus and his companions. Odysseus is avenged and once more master of his own palace (Book XXII).

In Book XXIII he reveals himself to his wife, and in Book XXIV to his aged father Laertes. With the aid of Athena they put to flight the relatives and friends of the suitors. The poem closes with this pacification, which assures the lasting triumph of Odysseus.

**8. Structure. Unity. Formation.**<sup>1</sup>—Like the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, too, considered in its entirety, gives the impression of unity in diversity. Elements of very dissimilar nature are united in it: certain parts are like stories for children,—some are pastoral, some resemble domestic romance, and some are like very sombre drama. But the

<sup>1</sup> Consult Kirchhoff, the excursus in the edition above cited. To this scholar is due the first clear exposition of the questions relating to the structure of the poem. Cf. Wilamowitz, *Homericæ Untersuchungen*, *sup. cit.*; and E. Kammer, *Die Einheit der Odyssee*, Leipsic, 1874. See also the bibliographical note on the *Iliad*, p. 22.

poem nevertheless forms a whole, whose structure is simple and yet carefully thought out.

Its unity is due to the passionate desire of Odysseus from beginning to end to be again in the midst of his people, in peaceable possession of his estate and his home. This desire is disclosed to us in the beginning, and almost all of the poem is concerned with it. Almost every part shows us the obstacles that stand in the way, postponing or compromising its realization; or else the stern efforts of will by which Odysseus at last succeeds in surmounting them. The *Odyssey*, then, is far from being a biography of marvels in verse, following through changes of fortune the adventures of a leading character. It is the organized and definitely planned development of a situation, and a sentiment that, arising from this situation, continues while it continues and dies when it dies. The unifying principle is really inherent and organic, arising from the conception of the subject and exercising an influence over the entire work. Moreover, this situation, as we have it in the poem, is not developed in regular sequence. It is shown to us only at the moment when its solution is near at hand. Then, by means of inserted narratives, we are informed of its previous phases; and finally there is presented the catastrophe, which forms the essential part. Such a structure gives to epic something like dramatic concentration, increases interest up to the culminating point, and so confirms the impression of unity. Such a disposition of the parts and such a conception of unity can have the effect neither of hazard nor of superficial arrangement made after the parts were composed. We must suppose one of two things: either that they are the work of some poet of genius who formed the general plan of the narrative and then composed the principal parts; or that they are due to the gradual growth of the poem and connected with the history of its formation. What is the conclusion that the diversity of the different elements permits us to draw in the matter?

One may say that the structure of the *Odyssey* is somewhat unsatisfactory in detail, but highly pleasing when considered as a whole. The first four books form, as we have seen, a sort of introduction, in which Telemachus is in the foreground. The introduction, considered in itself, fits the poem; yet it is attached by an awkward connection: the beginning of the fifth book represents the gods as deliberating a second time what they had decided in the first, and only then taking pains to execute their decree. In this introduction, unmistakable signs, that we cannot discuss here, betoken a considerable revision. The second part, containing the arrival of Odysseus among the Phæacians, the description of his

welcome there, and the series of his adventures (V–XII), gives rise to observations of the same nature. The tale of Odysseus seems to have been kept purposely in reserve, that the part which serves as an introduction to it might be extended. In the tale itself, certain portions are difficult of reconciliation with others. There are numerous variations of the same theme; notably the prophecies of Circe and Tiresias, which, when compared, prove to be quite alike. One episode, the visit to the region of the dead, is clearly made up of elements composed in different ages and never quite harmonized. The third and last part, containing the return of Odysseus to his home and the vengeance he executes there, appears to have more unity, yet, on analysis, is found to be equally loose. To note here only certain points, let us mention the double conception of the disguise of Odysseus. At one moment it is due to a miracle wrought by Athena, and as such disappears at her behest; moreover, its disappearance is sufficient to cause immediate recognition of Odysseus. Again it is conceived of as a quite natural change, the result of age and of hardships undergone, and consequently cannot be put aside at will; therefore Odysseus is in need of external signs to make himself known. The series of events which fills this part of the poem is far from coherent. We find not only variations of the same theme, but also important details which do not harmonize. The instructions of Odysseus to his son in Book XVI do not conform to what the two do afterward (Book XIX, beginning), nor with the scene of combat for the regulation of which they were given (Book XXII). The close of the poem, after the recognition of Odysseus and Penelope, was rejected even by the critics of antiquity. It seems to have been deliberately added to the preceding scenes. Finally, a curious and significant incoherence is that Athena, who constantly protects Odysseus in the closing scenes, is almost absent from the earlier ones. The reason given for this in Book XIII (v. 141) has evidently only the value of a pretext, designed to conceal or excuse a real divergence of conception. All these differences lead to a very different hypothesis from that of mere superficial revision or interpolation. The condition of the poem cannot be explained except by admitting a series of enlargements and transformations that necessitated weak connection and scant harmony.

If one considers the artless and marvellous tales that Odysseus relates to Alcinous, it seems natural to believe that these are the original parts of the *Odyssey*, or at least the first to be fully developed. They must have taken shape at a time when the countries around the western Mediterranean were already somewhat known, but not yet thoroughly so; and when popular imagination peopled the sea

with great and terrible monsters. If the Æolians, as is supposed, settled at Cumæ as early as the tenth century, and if the colonization of Sicily and Magna Græcia took place in the second half of the eighth, then it is between these dates, about the beginning of the ninth century, perhaps, that the theme of the return of Odysseus could give rise to a series of poetic lays of greater or less length. Whatever their primitive form, these lays were the first sketch of the *Odyssey*. No doubt, the character of Odysseus, his desire to return to Ithaca, his energy and patience, and the resources of his will, already seemed to be data for the subject. But there was as yet nothing to determine the form of composition or the character of the poem as a whole.

That began to be determined, however, when a poet conceived the idea of treating, in a series of chants, the last part of the legend, the catastrophe, in which Odysseus enters his palace and executes his vengeance. This theme, in fact, contained within itself the germ of unity that had been lacking in the lays. It comprised only a single act, properly speaking; but the act presupposed a whole process of preparation that might be developed. There was need to relate how Odysseus disembarked at Ithaca, tested his servants, and watched and deceived the suitors; and to recount the combat, and the recognition between husband and wife. This was accomplished by a single bard in a small number of chants, that could be given separately, each as a complete whole. The series constitutes to-day the basis of the second part of the poem; but the additions that were made little by little render it impossible to determine with certainty what were the primitive chants.

When this part was popularized by recitation, and came to be regarded as a whole, the idea sprang up naturally of attaching it to the ancient lays already mentioned, which recounted the events immediately preceding. For such a purpose the chants needed to be abridged and condensed. The bard who did the recasting had the happy idea of putting the story into the mouth of Odysseus himself. He conceived that Odysseus should relate the chants to his first host after his arrival in Ithaca. This was Alcinous, king of the Phæacians. Thus the series of adventures could be represented as a whole under the form of personal memoirs. Only the introduction was wanting which should tell how Odysseus came to leave the isle of Calypso, suffered shipwreck at Scheria, and had been received by Alcinous. These chants comprise, therefore, all the middle portion of the poem, excepting the additions and revisions of later times. Joined to the series already formed, the whole was a long production, between whose parts there might well be here and there



defects of continuity and slight disagreements; yet they had the character of unity already noted, to which, from beginning to end, attention was directed. This was because the later manipulations had had for their object precisely the adaptation to one another of the elements already existing. But they were not so clever as to make it necessary to admit that the author of one part was the author of the whole.

Things might then have come to a pause; the *Odyssey* was composed. Still, it received later some development which finished its form. Another bard, very different from the two preceding in the turn of his character, determined to add to the double series of chants an introduction, in which he would recount the journey undertaken by Telemachus in search of news of his father. It is true that this design does not seem to have been executed at one time by the hand of one man, but that matters little. The new lays relative to Odysseus' return formed a group almost as extensive as that dealing with the anger of Achilles. The equality was almost complete when the poem had once received as a conclusion the close of the twenty-third book and the entire twenty-fourth. It was still necessary, if the work was to have the qualities of a great poem, to reduce to harmony the various incoherent details. Certain slight additions made in this concluding period did not change the appearance of the whole. When the editors under Pisistratus reduced the poem to writing, they needed to give only occasional touches, and especially to choose between the various treatments they found existing.

**9. Beauty as a Whole. Extent and Variety. Enhancement of Interest. Slight Monotony of Invention.** — The result was excellent. In the vast frame the most varied inventions found their place; and certain of them gave to the new poem a degree of beauty which the *Iliad* did not have. There was pompous decoration, a vast expanse of sea, undiscovered lands, and all the impressiveness of the unknown, to display to the imagination a marvellous perspective. To follow the wandering vessel, driven by tempests to shores where never man had landed, must have been a delight to the simple auditors. A thousand fantastic visions were offered them: man-eating giants, seductive and dread Sirens, the floating island of Æolus, girt with its iron wall, monsters of the deep, strange peoples, lost islands in which gods were dwelling, the dismal region of the dead, silent and inauspicious: and, by way of contrast, the joyous city of the Phæacians, full of song and dancing, games and festivals. By turns the story passed from shadow to light, from terror to joy. Farther on there were other charming scenes: the emotion of the exile restored

to his native land, the gracious hospitality of Eumæus, the amusing, yet truthful, details of rustic life, long and delightful conversations, the dramatic self-concealment of a man hiding in his own home, touching and unexpected recognitions, the domestic life of a great palace, the going and coming of servants, the games and banquets of the suitors, and their insolence; and finally, the long-expected, adroitly postponed vengeance, coming suddenly, and filling the great hall with streams of blood. It cannot be denied that for us the narratives are sometimes tedious; but we must remember that the auditors of the epic period were not so impatient as we. The ability of a poet to expand his subject, or multiply inventions, won their admiration. They knew no pleasanter way of passing time than by listening to these ever fresh narrations. The *Odyssey* afforded them a double pleasure by its great extent and its diversity.

With all its length, too, the *Odyssey* has the merit of a well-sustained interest. The farther one proceeds in the poem the more one feels the approach of the catastrophe; and the more, too, one wishes for it. The story is charmingly told and makes one impatient by showing the suitors becoming more and more odious, the situation of Penelope more and more critical, and the wrath and suffering of Odysseus fiercer and more fierce. The progress of the action is seen in every deed the hero performs, in the recognitions and the general march of events leading to the final issue. But at the same time, the catastrophe is postponed by the invention of episodes designed to make one impatient with anxiety. Owing to the nature of the subject, dramatic progress is more evident than in the *Iliad*, since the event that shall end the action is more definitely discerned. The poem can close only with the death of the suitors. This is felt at the very beginning; and, though forgotten now and then, the lapse is only for a moment. When Odysseus has come to Ithaca, the vision of the closing scene is present, and may be said to command attention thereafter with constantly increasing force.

The composition of the *Odyssey* is, however, less harmonious than that of the *Iliad*. The different parts are not so well fused into a harmonious whole. The fantastic and the real are put side by side, each still remaining distinct. The adventure with the Cyclops is a child's tale; but the killing of the suitors is a tragedy. And despite the variety already noticed, the poem does not escape monotony. The adventures of Odysseus are based on a series of similar inventions. The tests he gives in his palace are alike except in detail. Especially in the second part, the poet's fancy seems to have more grace than force, more freedom than boldness or brilliance. The ancient critic who wrote the treatise *On the Sublime*, attributed to Longinus, ex-

plained this feature of the *Odyssey* by the age of the poet, supposing that Homer composed the *Iliad* in the flower of his manhood and the *Odyssey* in his old age. The hypothesis, though without historic value, states clearly enough an impression still felt by almost every one.

**10. Religion of the *Odyssey*.<sup>1</sup> The Marvellous Element. Greater Realism of Certain Parts. Some of the Characters. Moral Tone.** — If we pass from the composition to the content of the poem, we see that it rests on the same basis of religious faith as the *Iliad*. The gods who take part in it are, in all essential matters, the same; and, in a general way, their relations with men have not changed. Here, too, they take part in the whole epic action and their power is exercised to bring events to the desired end. The religion of the poem is everywhere instinctive and traditional, rather than philosophic, and is always foreign to any theological tendency. Such, however, is only its general aspect; if one considers more closely, comparing the poem with the *Iliad*, certain characteristic differences appear.

Although still passionate, the gods are no longer in violent conflict with one another. They have discontinued threats, quarrels, and combats among themselves. Only Poseidon, the enemy of Odysseus, and Athena, his protectress, are still opposed; and the opposition is very slight. In fact, they are busy by turns rather than simultaneously and in contrary ways. Olympus is the patron, on the whole, of right against injustice. The religious tone of the poem has more of a moral tendency than that of the *Iliad*. No divinity upholds the suitors. Zeus brings about the triumph of the just cause, and that without strife or contradiction. His authority does not need, as in the *Iliad*, to be backed up by threats or sustained by force; it enjoys a constant, tacit assent. Peace in Olympus is the rule in the *Odyssey*; and though religious faith has grown purer, the poem really loses in dramatic interest. The celestial world, grown wiser, no longer has the energetic and tumultuous life due, as in the *Iliad*, to its passions.

Another difference is that, in the oldest parts of the *Iliad*, divine intervention has an air of mystery about it. The gods do not appear in the presence of men, but simply make men feel their presence; they never intervene except when the occasion is worthy of them. The *Odyssey*, like the later parts of the *Iliad*, has a different conception. It employs gods without scruple, as mere epic machinery, useful in producing certain effects, or in escaping certain difficulties. The miraculous element has ceased to be of consequence. Athena

<sup>1</sup> Consult Benjamin Constant, *De la Religion*, vol. III. See also the note on the gods of the *Iliad*, p. 27.

appears in the guise of a traveller, of Mentor, of a girl, of a young shepherd, of a bird; she appears and disappears hastily; she performs the functions of a herald, equips a bark, puts in the way of Odysseus indications that any common man might have given him, fills the dark palace with the light of her presence when it would be an advantage, and is so much a busybody as not to seem seriously occupied. Such an indiscreet fashion of making the gods serve one's purpose is really anything but religious. It is the religion of ornament, in which true religious sentiment counts for very little indeed.

As the miraculous abounds, so does the marvellous, at least in one part of the poem. The voyage of Odysseus till his landing in Ithaca is a fairy tale. This element of marvel, foreign to the *Iliad* and to some parts of the *Odyssey* itself, springs manifestly from a trait of racial character which the legend of Odysseus incorporated and developed. Artless, possibly, among its first employers, it is not wholly so in the Homeric poems. The narrator, it is true, takes a sincere delight in it, and never seeks, as a decided sceptic might do, to show its unlikelihood by his manner of presentation. Yet he no longer has the simplicity of spirit nor the instinctive frankness of a true believer. He treats his subject with evident indifference to its historic value, as if it were matter of poesy, striving simply to please, impress, or amuse. Improbabilities of detail do not concern him. The adventure of Odysseus with the Cyclops is full of them, yet he cares little; his story is charming, sparkling with life and beauty. He puts into it terror, hostility, and friendship, and even cunning; and that is all he needs. The tales of marvel are animated by nearly the same spirit. They have the light, charming humor of an Ionic bard accustomed to live in an atmosphere of fiction,—a poet sensitive to the impressions of his subject, who conceives without effort things scarcely credible, and weaves them into an exquisite poetic tissue, without thinking of the possibility of asking how much of it he believes or even whether he believes at all.

But by the side of stories in which fancy has free play, considerable portions of the *Odyssey* show careful observation of contemporary life. This is particularly true of the first books and of all that come after the landing of Odysseus in Ithaca. We find here a degree of realism so much greater that it is worthy of remark.

In the *Iliad*, all the great characteristic scenes are represented with bold lines. With a sure stroke, poesy plunges deep into the reality of life; but that reality is exalted, ennobled, and idealized. The narrative takes little heed of petty detail; it brings to light only strong passions and emotions, only dramatic moments and leading aspects. Details are suggested, and then brought into the



general current, whose force sweeps everything before it. Only a few chants form an exception, and this indicates their later origin. But what is exceptional in the *Iliad* is usual in the *Odyssey*. The narrative, far from seeking great dramatic scenes, takes pleasure in dwelling upon mediocre matters. Much space is given to descriptions, even at times to those that do not promote the development of the action. The narrative is especially prolonged in treating familiar manners. Conferences, though often serving only to give the personages opportunity to reveal themselves or simply to occupy and charm the attention, are multiplied. The art shown is one of delicate and subtle imitation, pleasing mostly by its justice and its truth. We are delighted to find, in a frank, lifelike picture, a thousand details of domestic life, aptly presented, without minutiae, and exquisitely natural. Poetic invention assumes a phase akin to observation; and the epic in this aspect seems like a prelude to the romance of manners.

Under these circumstances, the personages cannot be drawn with the vigorous relief which the powerful creation of the *Iliad* bestowed. Really, if we except Odysseus, who is very different, most of the characters of the *Odyssey* seem weak beside those of the great Trojan epic. They are portrayed with fine, light lines rather than painted in powerful colors. Yet the design is often charming; and, however simple, it is always animated. Penelope, though reduced to secondary importance, has a touching grace in a number of scenes. The maid Nausicaa, though appearing but for an instant, can never be forgotten. She pleases by her youth, her exquisite beauty, her frank, sprightly finesse, her generosity and intelligence. King Alcinous and Queen Arete, though we catch only a glimpse of them, have an engaging dignity which makes us love them. In the opening chants, Nestor, Menelaus, and Helen, though not strongly characterized, are yet sufficiently so to make it a pleasure when one finds in them personages already known. The youth Telemachus, though yet uncertain how much to do and how much to attempt, but upright, sincere, generous, and devoted to the honor and memory of his father, would attract us more, if he were not reduced, in the second part, to play a rôle quite subordinate. The servants are excellent; Eumæus especially is good, hospitable, content with his humble lot, and faithful to his master, present or absent. We have a charming picture of him receiving his master at his fireside in the rustic home amid his herds. The frame, being appropriate to the picture, sets it off to advantage. The suitors have the fault of being all alike. They form a group in which the individuals, though possessed in some cases of personal traits, have

scarcely even the little credit they deserve. The group is noisy, blustering, and insolent, but devoid of the strong passion necessary in an epic poem.

None of the personages is given opportunity to show what can really be called character. Their individual traits, for want of vigor, are lost in the general representation of the mass. There is but one real hero, Odysseus. Remarkable already in the *Iliad*, he assumes here paramount importance; and it is in him almost wholly that the dramatic and moral beauty of the poem are evinced. Thoroughly human, he appeals to us and captivates us at once from the fact that he loves and suffers. His spirit, though admirably courageous and patient, is by no means stoic. It feels keenly every bitter pang, every deception or hardship. At times sinking into despair, it always rises again with indomitable energy. His excellent moral force is supported by auxiliary qualities of the first order: a ready, sound intelligence, prudence that defies cunning, fertility ready to meet all emergencies, and craft that amounts to heroism. The character certainly must have been known to tradition before there was an *Odyssey*. It had its roots deep in the heart of the Greek people. But the *Odyssey* disclosed its worth and gave it finished form. Owing to the poem, Odysseus became a strong epic character, and acquired immortality. The variety of the scenes in which he appears, their connection, and the turns of his fortune, constitute the real structure of the whole work, and display to full advantage the essential features of his personality.

More than anything else, it is the importance given to Odysseus that lends the poem its moral tone. This is more marked than in the *Iliad*, yet without making the poem more didactic. No work, by simple narration of facts, could better extol the virtues essential to good conduct, or praise intelligent bravery, painstaking thought, and perseverance in the midst of hardship. Incidentally it glorifies family affection and fidelity to friends, and lashes violence and injustice. Yet its morality is not chivalrous. It is even less so than that of the *Iliad*, owing, perhaps, to the nature of the subject and the type of the hero. Dissimulation, a favorite weapon in the hero's struggle against his enemies, is often justified by his misfortunes and ennobled by his courage; yet sometimes, too, it tends to become second nature to him, or, at least, an art of which he is somewhat vain. From the point of view of history, this is an interesting trait, characteristic of a certain age of Ionic civilization.

**11. Form of the Poem. Its Style and Language.** — In form, the *Odyssey* closely resembles the *Iliad*. All the essentials of epic poetry

are there: fulness of narration, formal speeches, formulas of transition, and traditional phraseology. The general manner of exposition is the same. Properly speaking, there is no dialogue; the narratives are largely rhetorical, and the divisions well marked, brief *résumés* showing the phases of the action and binding the different parts together. The art in each poem is, then, fundamentally the same; and if we were content with a summary impression, this striking resemblance would conceal the differences, because they are less apparent—noticeable, in fact, only to an attentive observation.

But on looking more closely, one finds that the epic language and style of the *Odyssey* are less primitive than those of the *Iliad*. The style is not so pompous or dazzling. Extended comparisons are much rarer, some portions of the poem having almost none at all; and those that do occur are shorter and more strictly appropriate to their subject. A sense of logical proportion begins to dominate the thought. This difference seems due in part to a change of subject-matter; but the explanation is not complete, unless we consider the new habits of thought beginning to come into vogue in Ionian society. And the study of the language shows this still more decisively than that of the style. The vocabulary of the *Odyssey* is more modern than that of the *Iliad*, despite the determination of the epic poets to remain faithful to the traditions of their art. If one attempts to trace in the two poems the history of words, one finds that the processes of derivation proper to the Greek language have produced in the *Odyssey* a considerable number of terms unknown to the *Iliad*. This is especially true of certain characteristic classes of words, such as terms for denoting qualities, and, to a greater extent, abstract nouns. The language of the *Odyssey* is perceptibly more abstract than that of the *Iliad*.

Studied in the same way, the versification of the two poems leads to analogous observations. Despite the conservatism of tradition, indications of a new taste are apparent. For example, *aposiopesis*,<sup>1</sup> common in the *Iliad*, is much rarer in the *Odyssey*. If this were a mere process of primitive versification, we should have a right to conclude that the second poem was composed or revised entire after the first had received definite form in nearly all its parts.

#### C. — CONCLUSIONS RESPECTING THE TWO HOMERIC POEMS

**12. The Two Poems and their Time. Their Influence.**—From all this one sees that the two great Homeric poems represent two dis-

<sup>1</sup> [One of the best known examples of aposiopesis is in the address of Juno to the Winds in Vergil's *Æneid*, I, 135: "How dare ye winds thus stir sea and sky to tumult. You I'll—but first 'tis better to calm the troubled waves."—Tr.]

tinct phases of poesy and of Ionic civilization. The *Iliad* is essentially a poem of war; it must have been composed soon after the conquest, when men's minds were still full of the passions which it had excited. Its moral inspiration is admiration of heroic virtues, among which strength and courage occupy first rank. The *Odyssey* betokens an aspiration for peace. It brings before us kings whose early life was military, such as Nestor or Menelaus, and who are at present enjoying their riches in peace. The principal hero, Odysseus, has only one desire, that of returning home to enjoy its comfort. The poem proclaims the social value of law and justice; and though it still admires bodily strength, it gives equal honor to cleverness. It seems to belong, all in all, to the time when Ionian society was organizing and had come to be less occupied with military struggles than with the political and legal questions of civil life. The dream of adventures at sea shows the influence of the first voyages to distant shores, which were a prelude to the great movements of colonization in the eighth century. But, of course, these are only general indications, and can teach us nothing about the exact date of the revision or addition of such or such a passage.

These questions of date and origin, though important enough for literary history as we conceive it, had only a mediocre interest for the Greeks themselves. For them, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, with a few less celebrated works, were due to the genius of a single poet, who stood alone in his glory; and they admired the poems long before they asked any questions of criticism concerning them.<sup>1</sup>

We shall trace in the next chapter the diffusion of epic poesy and incidentally that of the Homeric poems. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* probably became popular more readily than the other works of their class because of their superiority. At any rate, they exercised a far-reaching and profound influence. These old poems, everywhere repeated, were well suited to develop in their hearers the sentiments with which they were filled and with them a keen sense of literary beauty. Poesy had shown its power of exaltation and idealization in such a way that well-established traditions of art and taste were necessarily the result. If the first Greek poetry had been written on Doric soil, it would probably have been different in character, and would have transmitted its character in some measure to the succeeding generations of poets. The Ionic poetry of the Homerides, sparkling in their two great masterpieces,

<sup>1</sup> The first persons who separated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, assigning them to different poets, were the Alexandrians. The scholars who did this were accordingly called Separators, *Oi Xwpίζοντες*.



assured the influence of Ionia over the products of Hellenic imagination. It contributed to render this imagination freer, more supple, more animate with life and grace, more truly human. As the other epic poems lost favor, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* absorbed all the active forces of epic society, but only to confirm their own precedence. Once become classic, the two came to be used at an early period as an important element in the moral and intellectual education of the Greek youth. The poems were to transmit from generation to generation an acquaintance with heroic epic, to quicken men's minds, to develop in them a sense of beauty, to present to them an ideal at once national and human, to render them capable of generous and deep emotion. We can see in various Greek poets, and even in prose writers, such as Plato, the evident influence of Homer. But the occult influence which he exercised upon the masses and upon the moral and intellectual life of the whole nation is something more easily felt than demonstrated. It existed, however, and a very happy one it was. Ionia rendered to Greece the immense service of giving her, in her very infancy, an admirable poetry, wonderfully appropriate to education and progress, and an inexhaustible source of ideas and inspiration. Hellenic genius derived thence some of its force without losing either its good sense or its liberty. Homeric poetry did not enslave it: it was too young and childlike to impose itself as an immutable law upon minds daily growing richer in experience; yet, owing to the lessons they received from it, these minds could assert their liberty without denying its influence or abandoning its precedents. It taught them to idealize objects of reality, to summon their observation daily to the service of art, and to create a form of beauty in accord with truth. Greece continued only the more faithful because her allegiance was voluntary.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CYCLIC POETS AND THE RHAPSODISTS

1. Epic Poetry after Homer. The Cycle.<sup>1</sup>
2. Diffusion of Epic Chants. The Rhapsodists.
3. Certain Heroic Epics in Particular.
4. Pisander of Rhodes.
5. Homeric Hymns and Epigrams.
6. Parodies of Epic: the *Margites*, the *Batrachomyomachia*, etc. End of the Period of Heroic Epic.

**1. Epic Poetry after Homer. The Cycle.** — We have seen that, beside the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, epic chants must have been freely produced in Asiatic Greece during the two centuries immediately preceding the beginning of the Olympiads. These chants were at that time in demand in all Ionic cities, and the bards endeavored to satisfy a taste which to them had become profitable. The same condition appears to have continued, though to a less extent, through the eighth and seventh centuries, and not to have ceased wholly till the end of the sixth. This decadence of heroic epic is due to several causes, chief among which are: the exhaustion of subjects after a period of such abundant production; the advent, and then the happy triumph, of lyric poetry; and above all, in the sixth century, the transformation of the dithyramb<sup>2</sup> and the birth of tragedy, which made men feel the monotony and tedium of the old compositions. Moreover, the progress of reflection and of interest in the past gave rise to prose, called into existence philosophy, history, and geography, and everywhere brought the marvellous into discredit. Finally, social changes were taking place: the decline of the aristocracy, the increase of general culture through more abundant commercial intercourse, the influx of ideas and of facts of knowledge, the new taste for discussion — everything, in fact, which slowly transforms a people, docile, credulous, and unlimitedly attentive, into one more difficult to satisfy, eager for lively emotions, readily influenced by new ideas, and above all impatient and changeable. It would be highly inter-

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: G. Dindorf, *Homeri Carmina et Cycli Epici Reliquiæ*, Paris, Didot, 1837–1856; G. Kinkel, *Epicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, I, Leipsic, 1877. The summaries of Proclus are given in B. Westphal, *Scriptores Metrici Græci*, I, Leipsic, 1866.

Consult Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, Bonn, 1849–1865; Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Homericæ Untersuchungen*, Berlin, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> More fully described in chap. X. — Tr.]

esting, were it possible, to trace the history of the heroic epic through those centuries; but antiquity itself early lost all exact knowledge of the subject, and has left us only incomplete and untrustworthy evidence. All that we dare attempt is to put ourselves, in a general way, into the midst of a period full of obscurity.

It has been usual, since antiquity, to designate most of these lost poems as cyclic. The word "cycle" means the whole body of post-Homeric epics, embracing almost all the heroic legends. It is important, in the very beginning, to get a clear idea of the meaning of these terms.

The first classification of the old epic poems seems to have been the work of the grammarian Zenodotus of Ephesus, who was librarian of the Ptolemies at Alexandria in the third century B.C. He arranged the poems in the royal library and catalogued them so as to form a cycle, that is, something complete in itself. Owing to his collection, the mass of old poems appeared thenceforth to be entire and complete. Zenodotus not only respected the independence of the works, but did not even try to harmonize them or to form them into a continuous series. That was the work of the mythographers. Because these sought in the old poems the facts which the poems contained, and wished to coördinate those facts, they made such extracts as would go well in combination with one another, leaving aside contradictory portions and passages that repeated things already said. Such artificial cycles were rather numerous in the imperial period. Some of them were designed for use in the schools; others were addressed to a public interested in ancient lore. We still possess, under the name of Ilian Tables, some tablets, or fragments of tablets, on which were engraved episodes of the Trojan War, as recounted in the cycle of some famous scholar of the time. Whether designed for instruction or as ornaments for libraries and study-rooms, they attest the popularity of these compositions. The cycle best known to us is that of Proclus. The author, it is said, was a grammarian of the second century A.D.; but many regard him as the neo-Platonic philosopher who lived in the fifth century. Whatever the truth may be, his cycle is a simple compilation, valuable as preserving partial summaries of certain lost epics, together with the names of the poets to whom they were attributed. But in making use of it to reconstruct an image of Greek epic, we must not forget that it has come down to us considerably disfigured. The cyclic authors chose among the poems such as best served their purpose; and even then, they neglected whatever they could not use. The result is that these old mutilated works always seem, through the accounts we have of them, to have been composed in a

manner to harmonize with one another, an idea which is far from the truth.

Before speaking more particularly of any one, let us try to determine where they all belong in the general outline we have made, and to indicate their common characteristics.

Most of them appear to lack the natural unity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Owing to a subtle tendency of the epic to resemble history, which it really contains in germ, they offered continuous series of events rather than the development of a passion or a moral situation. Such is, no doubt, the reason why this form disappeared so early. And as works of art, the later epics are inferior to the great Homeric poems, whatever may have been their merit in certain parts. Furthermore, having been composed later, when invention was beginning to be less active, they must almost all have suffered from the abuse of imitation which marks the decadence of artistic types. They doubtless contained, even to satiety, the same epic themes, the same treatment, situations, characteristic features, and style. Beneath a superficial, apparent variation, there was a fundamental monotony and an irremediable triteness. What was later to destroy lyric poetry after Pindar, and tragedy after the great poets of the fifth century, was already destroying the epic, after the first Homerides.

Whether these epics were, from the beginning, great poems continuous and complete, or were formed, as we have shown in the case of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, by successive additions, we cannot say; and indeed it is scarcely possible that any single answer could be true of all. The most ancient ones, composed for recitation under the same conditions as the Homeric poems, must have been formed in like manner. The others, produced when the art of writing was in progress and the lays of the minstrels were being formed, may possibly have been expanded at once into ample compositions. We are necessarily reduced in the matter to vague hypotheses.

With reference to their subjects, however, these poems may be distributed in a certain number of groups, still fairly well distinguished. Some of them are connected with the antique legends of cosmogony; such were the *Theogonies* and *Titanomachies*, which probably differed from the Hesiodic poems on the same subjects in being less didactic and more dramatic. Others treated certain points in the early history of families, as the *Danaid*, the *Phocæid*, the *Minyad*, the *Atthis*, the *Amazonia*, etc. We know only a small number of titles of this class, but it is probable that such poems abounded during several centuries, forming the rich basis whence



lyric poetry, tragedy, Alexandrian elegy, and archæological erudition, each in turn, drew its materials. Still other poems took for their subjects the exploits of famous heroes. Therefore, from the eighth century, and perhaps earlier, down to the sixth, there was a great number of *Heracleids*, celebrating the labors of the son of *Alemena*. The *Capture of Æchalia*, attributed to *Creophylus* of *Samos*, belonged to this group. In the same class might be cited at least one *Theseid*, of which we know neither the author nor the date. But the groups of poems most worthy of mention are those connected with the great legendary events of the heroic age, the Theban and Trojan wars. Evidently the two wars, owing to their dramatic character, were, through the whole epic period, the two subjects best liked by both poets and public.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Diffusion of the Epic Chants. The Rhapsodists.**<sup>2</sup>—The heroic epic, after having arisen in *Ionia*, seems to have been taken up rather quickly in the other parts of the Greek world, and to have given rise there to a poetic activity of some importance. The *Ionian* bards must have been tempted, as their art was perfected, to go ever farther in search of new auditors; and the commercial relations between the Greek cities, growing more and more common, could not but foster this movement. The appearance of the first *Hesiodic* poems in central Greece, about the eighth century, shows that the influence of *Ionian* art had already begun to make itself felt there. Then, too, some of the poems just cited have such a pronounced local character that they cannot have been produced elsewhere than in the regions with which they are connected. At all events, the poets of this time whose names, real or fanciful, have come down to us, seem to have been largely natives of *Asiatic Greece*, the islands of the *Ægean*, or the eastern shores of *Greece proper*. One may say that the heroic epic, from beginning to end, belonged chiefly to *Oriental and Ionic Greece*, of which the centre is the *Ægean Sea*. We shall see in the next chapter that the mainland of *Greece* also had its epic poetry; but this was sensibly different.

The decadence of epic invention made necessary a transformation of the bards into rhapsodists. The bard was a poet who, though often reciting the lays of his predecessors, as often composed new ones of his own. In the beginning he sang, in the proper sense of the word; and even when the song had given place to simple melodramatic recitation, the bard still rightfully retained the name of

<sup>1</sup> This will be discussed more fully in section 3. — Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> Consult *Schubersch.* *Dissertationes Homericæ*, I and II, in the Teubner edition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

δοῖός, which means "singer"; for he continued to use the cithara in the preludes, and to sustain by occasional notes the cadence of his sentences. But at an undetermined period, probably in the eighth century, the antique mode fell into disuse. The singer was succeeded by a reciter called a rhapsodist. With some few exceptions he was no longer a poet; at the most, he composed only preludes. His principal office was to recite the epics that had become classic. He was, properly speaking, an artist in elocution. He came before the public without the cithara, richly dressed, with a sprig of laurel in his hand, and declaimed, with a trained voice and appropriate gesture, certain portions of the old compositions. Hence comes his name, which seems to mean "stitcher of songs."<sup>1</sup> The art of the rhapsodist was intimately connected with the formalities of the religious festivals that were developed in Greece, beginning with the eighth century. The cities that organized these festivals called in reciters of old poems to make the festivals more splendid. Even competitive recitations were established. Nothing could have contributed more to the diffusion of the epic poems. It was the rhapsodists who carried Homeric poetry through Greece. Their influence, it is very certain, was great in bringing about the dominant success of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

A tradition which does not seem improbable tells us that, at Athens in the beginning of the sixth century, Solon instituted, or at least made laws for, the recitations of the rhapsodists; and that afterwards Pisistratus and his sons completed the work. In the absence of rules, in fact, each rhapsodist had to choose arbitrarily the portions of the Homeric poems best suited to his talent—one choosing, for example, brilliant and vigorous passages, another those in which fine painting of character abounded. If the order of recitation was not yet governed by the order of events in the poem, it might happen that the people heard the supplication of Priam at the feet of Achilles earlier than the quarrel of Achilles with Agamemnon. The first task of the organizers of the festivals was to decide that the lays should be recited in the order of the events. The unity of the Homeric poems, accordingly, was felt much more keenly; men were led to compare the various texts of the several lays and choose those which harmonized best with one another, verifying and com-

<sup>1</sup> Ραπτῶν ἐπέων δοῖός, says Pindar, *Nem.* II, 2, and this seems the proper etymology. The first element of the word *ῥαψῳδός* is doubtless closely connected with *ῥάψις*, "a seam"; the latter word, indeed, does not belong to the classic language, but popular instinct may have given it a form more or less regular that it might enter into the composition of the term of which need was felt. *Ῥαψῳδεῖν* is to "sing and stitch," as Pindar felt. The word at first may have been slightly disdainful; the bard, an inventor, regarded with scorn the "poem-stitchers" who adorned themselves in the plumage of others.

pleting their harmony. This was the work of the commission of editors who, at the order of Pisistratus, put into written form a continuous text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The work was a result of the popularity of rhapsodic recitations. Thus one can see what the importance of such recitations was for the history of epic poetry.

This very cursory sketch of the vicissitudes of epic will permit us to arrange in proper order a few works and names. We shall confine ourselves to the most important.

**3. Certain Heroic Epics in Particular.**—The Expedition against Thebes must have been celebrated in a large number of poems. The leading ones were: the *Œdipodeia*, on the misfortunes of Œdipus, which it connected probably with the crime of his father Laius; the *Thebaid*, on the rivalry between Eteocles and Polynices, and on the expedition of Adrastus and the chiefs assembled by him against Thebes, the death of the two brothers, and the disaster of the Argives; lastly the *Epigoni*, a poem on the second Theban War, that was carried on by the son of Polynices against the son of Eteocles and terminated in the victory of the Argives. Of these three poems, the most important by far was the *Thebaid*, which appears to have won admiration by the grandeur of its scenes, the relief into which certain personages were thrown, and the boldness and force of its poetic invention. It was the original of the Thebais produced later; and we shall find in tragic literature the trace of the influence which it exercised. We know nothing of its date, nor of its original author. Like most of the cyclic poems, it was long attributed by vague tradition to Homer. But when criticism began, certain traits were noted in the poem which made such an attribution impossible. After that it was regarded as anonymous.

The expedition of the Greeks against Troy, together with its beginnings and consequences, was the favorite material for the poets of the time. An Ionic poet of Miletus, whose name is given as Arctinus, composed, it is said, about the time when the Olympiads began, some chants narrating great events in the siege of Troy after the death of Hector. In the cycle of Proclus, these chants are divided into two groups, with two distinct titles; one, the *Ethiopid*, has for its principal incident the death of Memnon the Ethiopian, son of Aurora, who came to the aid of Priam and was slain by Achilles; the other, the *Capture of Ilium*. But it seems probable that the division is the work of the cyclic authors, who made two parts of the poem. It comprised a series of chants, more or less in harmony with those of the *Iliad* as then existing, and closed with the victory of the besiegers. A century later—about 650, if we may believe witnesses that have generally but mediocre authority—

a poet of Lesbos, named Lesches, composed another series of chants called the *Little Iliad*. According to the summary of Proclus, these were inserted between the two poems of Arctinus so as to connect them with each other. But other evidence causes us to believe that the arrangement of Proclus greatly altered the poem. In fact, Lesches recast the lays of Arctinus, or at least a large part of them, to his own liking, completing them with new episodes. There is a legend representing the two poets as competitors contending for a prize in song. Lesches, though a century later than Arctinus, was, accordingly, simply a rival treating the same subject.

With this group are connected two other celebrated poems: the *Cyprian Lays*, attributed to a certain Stasinus of Cyprus; and the *Nosti*, whose author, according to the majority of accounts, was a poet of Træzen named Hegias. In truth, however, neither the names of the poets nor the authorship of the poems are well attested. As to their dates, we are left quite in ignorance. The lays called *Cyprian*, as represented in the summary of Proclus, recount the beginning of the Trojan War, the muster, the two successive expeditions of the Greeks, and the commencement of the siege. The narrative thus supplied what was lacking in the *Iliad*, which was its sequel. It is impossible to say to-day whether the harmony was so exact as this summary leads one to suppose. Nevertheless, imitation of the *Iliad* is obvious in the style and structure of parts of these lays. Composed in the isle of Cyprus, as their name indicates, they gave great importance to the goddess Aphrodite, whose worship was particularly prevalent there. The *Nosti* related the adventures of the Greek chiefs after the capture of Troy, particularly the return of Neoptolemus, the voyages of Menelaus, and the death of Agamemnon. It would seem that the author had purposely omitted the misfortunes of Odysseus as being already told in detail in the *Odyssey*. But the form of his poem remained very obscure in the summary of Proclus.

Mention of the *Telegony*, attributed to a sixth-century poet of Cyrene named Eugammon, completes this list. The poem describes the last days of Odysseus, who was slain by his son Telegonus.

For us these poems are veiled in a deep obscurity. But in the later development of Greek literature they had an importance which must not be overlooked. Long attributed vaguely to Homer, they preserved and transmitted the old legends, which without them would have perished. It is in these epic lays that the lyric and tragic poets found a large number of their themes. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides take subjects from the cycle even oftener than from Homer. Moreover, the products of the plastic arts, vase



paintings, sculptures, relief work, attest how popular were the scenes celebrated by these poems. It may justly be said that they formed the education of Greek fancy during its youth and prepared the works of its maturity.

**4. Pisander of Rhodes.**<sup>1</sup>—Among the writers of Heracleids, only one is still known by name. He was a Rhodian, Pisander of Camiros, who lived, according to Suidas, about the middle of the seventh century. His *Ἡράκλεια* contained probably twelve chants, celebrating the twelve labors of the hero. He is said to have been the first to represent Heracles with a club. Although his epic is wholly lost, we can judge by these facts of the importance it had in the development of the legend. This had been, till then, diffuse, fluctuating, and marred by inconsistencies of detail. Pisander, taking his inspiration from earlier poems, produced a coherent narrative, which thenceforward was authoritative. His poem fixed the classic type of Heracles and the cycle of his labors.

**5. Homeric Hymns and Epigrams.**<sup>2</sup>—Though most of the great epic works of the time have disappeared, yet chance has preserved for us a certain number of short poems known under the name of Homeric hymns and epigrams. Only part of them, however, have literary value; yet they all have a certain interest as documents relating to the history of the rhapsodists.

The hymns, numbering thirty-three, serve as preludes (*προοίμια*) to the recitations of the rhapsodists. The group, formed probably in the Alexandrian period, figured in antiquity among the works attributed to Homer. In reality, every lay in the group is later than the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. Among the hymns, those worthy of special mention are the four longer ones, which probably were composed by different bards between the eighth and sixth centuries. These are the first, to Apollo; the second, to Hermes; the third, to Aphrodite; and the fourth, to Demeter. They are regular epic chants, in which are related certain episodes in the life of the gods; and are not inferior to many passages of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The Hymn to Apollo, probably composed of several portions originally distinct, tells of the god's birth at Delos and his establishment at Delphi. It is remarkable for its brilliance and grace, the variety of its subject-matter, and its tone. The Hymn to Hermes celebrates

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: The fragments of Pisander are in the Didot edition of Hesiod and in Kinkel, *Epicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*.

<sup>2</sup> EDITIONS: The Didot *Homeri Carmina*; G. Baumeister, *Hymni Homericæ*, Leipsic, 1860; Pierron, *L'Odyssée d'Homère*, Paris, 1875 (the *Hymns* are at the end of vol. II); E. Abel, *Homeri Hymni*, Leipsic, 1886; A. Gemoll, *Die homerischen Hymnen*, Leipsic, 1886; A. Goodwin, *Hymni Homericæ*, Oxford, 1893. The *Epigrams* are added to the *Hymns* in the editions of Pierron and Abel, and in the Didot edition.

with merry lightness the birth of the son of Maia and the first proofs he gives of his characteristic shrewdness by the invention of the cithara and the theft of the oxen of Apollo. The Hymn to Demeter, of which the spirit is truly religious, tells of the grief of the goddess when deprived of her daughter, and describes the institution of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Finally, the Hymn to Aphrodite, the least original of the four, is a picture of voluptuous elegance, in which are depicted the amours of Aphrodite and Anchises. The shorter hymns, twenty-nine in number, are products of very diverse origin and value. Most of them are mere short invocations, accompanied sometimes by a brief narrative. One of the best, the sixth, tells of the adventure of Dionysus when captured by the pirates. In general, in these short poems, the invention is mediocre, formulas abound, and the characteristic stamp is rather that of a profession than that of real genius. There is evident exhaustion of an art continuing to live only as tradition and imitation. Some few peculiar poems show traces of Orphism, the creeds of which were formed in the sixth century.

Under the term Homeric Epigrams are comprised seventeen short compositions preserved for us in the Life of Homer falsely attributed to Herodotus. For the most part they concern themselves with various incidents in the life of the rhapsodists, notwithstanding the representation that they belong to an earlier date. We see clearly enough that they were artificially grouped around the name of Homer; but of their real origin we know nothing.

**6. Parodies of Epic.** The *Margites*, the *Batrachomyomachia*, etc. The Παίγνια. End of the Period of Heroic Epic.<sup>1</sup> — Before finishing this chapter, a few words remain to be said about a number of works of mediocre merit, that are of interest as parodies of Homeric epic. It is a commonplace that the various types of literary composition, as they grow old, tend to become ridiculous. The heroic epic was perhaps more liable in this respect than any other literary type, because of its traditional pomp, its archaic formulas, and its ideal conceptions so much in contrast with the common walks of life.

Aristotle attributed to Homer the origin of comedy, ascribing to him the poem entitled *Margites*, of which he was thought to be the author. We possess only six verses of the work, in three fragments; but we know from various accounts that it treated in epic form the

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: The fragments of the *Margites* are in the Didot *Homeri Carmina*, and in Kaibel, *Epic. Græc. Frag.* I. The *Batrachomyomachia* is added to the *Hymns* in Pierron and in the Didot edition, and is published separately by G. Baumeister, *Batrachomyomachia*, Göttingen, 1852, and by A. Ludwig, *Die homerische Batrachomyomachia*, with the scholia and the paraphrases, Leipzig, Teubner, 1896.

adventures of a simpleton who was unable to act like other people. Ignorant and conceited, he performed a series of stupid acts for which, presumably, he had to pay dear. Satire here took the place of epic grandeur. This ridiculous character was celebrated like an epic personage, though he was the very opposite of a hero. Such a work could not be produced except in the decline of epic poetry. It cannot, at any rate, be attributed to a Homeric poet. Besides, iambic verses are mingled with the hexameters; and this betokens an origin posterior to Archilochus and Simonides of Amorgus. It has been attributed to Pigres the Carian, brother of Queen Artemisia, who lived at the beginning of the fifth century. It is scarcely probable, however, that the poem is so recent. Yet it must have originated in the decadence of heroic epic.

With the *Margites* may be compared the epic jest entitled the *War of the Frogs and Mice* (*Βατραχομυομαχία*), which we still possess. The poem recounts in three hundred verses a furious war which arose between the frogs of a marsh and the mice of the vicinity, owing to the death of a mouse whom a frog had invited to a pleasure party on the water and had allowed to drown. The gods, at first neutral, finally interfered to save the frogs from destruction; but even their lightning was not enough to put the victorious mice to flight. To do this, it was necessary that an army of crabs should appear on the scene. Such is its theatrical mechanism and its resolution.

As a parody of heroic epic, the author imitates the style, the formulas, the traditional treatment, and the narratives of epic. According to Suidas he was the same Pigres whom we have just considered, and there is no serious reason for doubting the testimony. The poem was successful in antiquity, and still more so in the Middle Ages among the Byzantines, and in the Renaissance. Really, however, it is mediocre. Even allowing for alterations in the text, it is difficult to praise its style, which is often insipid. The few ingenious inventions of detail conceal but poorly the dryness and meagreness of imagination. As the only specimen of the epic of beasts in Greek literature, the *Batrachomyomachia* has its value; but as a work of art, it is of inferior order.

Some of the biographers of Homer mention, under his name, various analogous poems, which they call the *Games* (*Παίγνια*). It is probable that there were, before and after the *Batrachomyomachia*, some other epic parodies of the same sort, whose leading characters were animals. Nothing remains of them, however, except uninteresting titles.

Such works show sufficiently that, by the beginning of the fifth

century, the period of heroic epic had passed by. Long narratives seemed tedious. Men were weary of combats, challenges of heroes, and assemblies human and divine. Epic machinery had exhausted all the vitality which made it useful. Men wanted something new. For a long time lyric poetry, which had a much greater power over men's hearts, had been in existence to charm them. But before considering this form of poetry, we must go back to speak of the didactic epic. It arose under the influence of the heroic epic and became, in its time of popularity, almost as successful as its model.



## CHAPTER V

### HESIOD AND THE HESIODIC POETRY

1. Didactic Poetry : its Origins. 2. Hesiod. 3. The Poem of the *Works and Days*. Its Composition. 4. The Principal Poet. His Philosophy. His Poetic Merit. His Language. 5. Other Moral and Technical Poems. 6. The *Theogony*. Subject of the Poem. Its Unity and Composition. The Author and the Date. 7. Merit of the *Theogony*. Its Language. 8. Other Genealogical Hesiodic Poems. The *Catalogues*, the *Eoiæ*, the *Ægimius*, etc. Detached Episodes : the *Shield of Heracles*, etc. 9. Lesser Writers of Genealogic Poetry.

**1. Didactic Poetry : its Origins.**<sup>1</sup>—The poetry which we have treated thus far aimed principally to please. If it preserved the memory of great events, its aim was less to instruct its hearers than to charm them; and if it brought virtues and vices into view, it was rather to produce emotion than to instruct. Indirectly, like all narrative poetry, it doubtless gave moral instruction, and even, to some extent, taught history. But it did this, if we may say so, unintentionally, and therefore without thought of exactitude. Quite different is the spirit of the poetry to which we now address ourselves. The latter, when it touches a point of morals, gives advice or makes prohibitions; when it treats the arts, the trades, the sciences, instead of describing them for the pleasure of the imagination, it lays down their rules; when it recalls the events of the past, the history of gods or men, it traces their relations, repeats their appellatives, tries, in a word, to fix in our minds what we ought to know, without pretending to excite any stirring emotion or varied pleasure. It is, then, a poetry essentially didactic, utilitarian, and severe. It may, indeed, have a beauty of its own—for otherwise it would not be poetry; but really it cares less for invention than for observation and report.

While heroic poetry had its favorite abode in Asiatic Greece and in the islands, this poetry appears to have been developed rather in Greece proper. Being less appropriate, however, to the Ionians, who loved pleasure, splendor, and elegance, it appears to have found

<sup>1</sup> Consult G. Marekscheffel, *Hesiodi, Eumeli, Cinathonis Fragmenta*, Lipsic, 1840; E. E. Sikes, *Folklore in the Works and Days of Hesiod* (*Classical Review*, VII, 1893, pp. 389-394).

its proper domain among the peoples of central Greece and the Peloponnesus, Bœotians, Locrians, Dorians, the races of toil, of fixed beliefs, of persistent traditions, and of utilitarian tendencies. These Greeks of the mainland, attached to their soil, stable and practical, instead of giving themselves over to the fancy of the bards, early suggested to their poets a taste for things that would be of service. Since there was a public which wished instruction merely, there arose highly talented spirits to undertake the task.

The origins of didactic poetry, like those of all other forms of composition, are obscure. Hesiod certainly did not create outright a wholly new type. Before his time, such poetry must have existed, at least in a crude form. In the absence of documents, we may think of it as in the form of oracles in verse, applicable to things of everyday life; or of sayings, technical precepts, formulas of two or three lines for the use of men in various trades, lists of feast-days, or genealogical hymns. Not much talent was needed to give such matter a passable form that would aid the memory. Any poet whatever could perform the task. And without such poets, it would be hard to understand how the public of the time could be prepared to enjoy an original work of the sort, or a man of genius get the idea of attempting it.

It seems natural to suppose that these first attempts were made in the language of a particular district, or in other words, in the various dialects of central Greece, if that be the place of their origin. But then it is difficult to see why Hesiod should have used the Ionic dialect — which he seems certainly to have used, notwithstanding the contrary hypotheses we shall mention later. Without denying that rustic poets may sometimes have composed verse in their own dialect, there is reason to believe that such a practice was not general. On reflection, we need not be surprised to find it otherwise. The simple use of hexameter as a means of expression shows a desire to distinguish the things thus treated from those of ordinary speech. But this verse had been brought to perfection by Ionic bards; it was associated with Ionic myths, and therefore with the forms of the Ionic dialect; and it was the diffusion of certain of these myths which had won, even in Greece proper, appreciation of their original merit. In using hexameter verse, a poet would be tempted to use with it the dialect inseparable from it, mingled here and there, by inadvertence or by design, with certain local forms. Hence the advantage of lending to the expression something exotic, which would ennoble the poetic theme and render it more worthy of attention. The oracles probably set the example, and the poets imitated their manner.

2. **Hesiod.**<sup>1</sup>—It is the unanimous tradition of antiquity that the man who won popular favor for the didactic poem was called Hesiod. He is the first poet to appear with really individual traits. Whereas, for us all the Homeric bards mingle together into an impersonal type, he appears in his work as a man to whom the circumstances of life and his own character gave distinctive features.

According to a passage of the *Works and Days* (vv. 633–640), against whose authenticity no decisive objection has ever been raised, Hesiod's father lived at Cyme in Æolis and devoted himself to maritime commerce. Not successful in gaining a fortune, he left his native district and went to live in Bœotia in the village of Ascera, at the foot of Mount Helicon, where he purchased a small estate. There he devoted himself to tilling the soil. At Ascera, apparently, his two sons, Hesiod and Perses, attained manhood. Hesiod was, then, at least by origin, an Asiatic Greek, an Æolian whose circumstances brought him to Bœotia. From infancy he lived as the son of a small landholder, learning all the details of rural life, and acquiring the tastes and ideas characteristic of people in his condition. There is little doubt that he toiled with his own hands. All his poetry marks him as having experienced the fatigue of manual labor. Yet this was not so arduous as to prevent him from cultivating his mind at the same time. He may have been, even in Asia, the pupil of some Ionic bard. At any rate, he must have found, in some way, the means of learning an art; for even the best-endowed could not avoid so doing. His technical apprenticeship was probably only a small part of his poetic education. We must think of him as at once a lover of old legends, proverbs, enigmas, and fables, and as a rustic philosopher, with an inquiring mind, a memory retentive of all he gathered in conversation, and a judgment which, inclining toward the practical, drew thence conclusions that grouped themselves spontaneously into an outline of doctrine. Gifted to a remarkable degree with the faculty of expression, he knew how to render, with grace and cleverness, in short and pungent phrases, in unexpected and suggestive figures, his own observations or those of others.

Yet there was needed a particular circumstance to bring his originality into full relief. His father having died, the estate was to be divided between the two sons. In the division, properly or improp-

<sup>1</sup> Ancient testimony concerning Hesiod: Plutarch, *Hesiod*; *Homer and Hesiod*; the *Life of Hesiod*, probably due to Tzetzes, found in Westermann, *Vitarum Scriptores*, and in various editions of Hesiod; Suidas, *Lexicon*, s.v. Ἡσιόδοσ.

Consult the prolegomena of Götting in his edition of Hesiod; A. Kirchhoff, *Der Roman eines Sophisten* (*Sitzungsber. d. Berl. Akad.*, 1892, p. 43).

erly, Hesiod thought himself greatly wronged. A suit took place between his brother and himself; and the judges, chiefs of the canton, or "kings" (βασιλῆες), decided in favor of Perses. Hesiod knew, or thought he knew, that they had been bribed by presents. A feeling of the injustice done him aroused his resentment. The principal element of the *Works*, as we have it to-day, is a didactic satire against violence and bad faith, whose dominant idea is that ill-gotten wealth is profitless. Originally this satire must have formed a distinct work, *On Justice*. It was the poet's vengeance. When recited at the reunions of his friends, if it did not bring him the restoration of what he had lost, it could scarcely have failed to arouse stirring emotions and establish his reputation. Whatever its pungency, he could rise at times, like a true poet, above his personal griefs, and express the truths of all time in beautiful verses.

The implied prediction of the poem, moreover, appears to have been fulfilled. Perses, enriched by an unjust decision, soon compromised his fortune through negligence and love of pleasure. He was obliged to borrow, to resort to expedients, and finally to confess himself bankrupt. Hesiod then addressed to him another poem, *On Works*, which forms to-day the second division of the Ἔργα. From a tone of anger the poet passed now to one of pity, half affected, half disdainful. As before, he drew from particular precepts a general law of conduct. Though addressing Perses, he aimed to teach all his countrymen the ideal of life for the toiling peasant, what he must do and what avoid, how perform his labors and how organize his estate.

To these two works, later combined in one, is due essentially the poet's fame. We cannot say that any of the other poems attributed to him are really authentic, nor can we absolutely deny that they are so. But had he written nothing more, these would secure for him our admiration.

Another passage of the *Works* (vv. 650-662) not, however, of undisputed authenticity, reveals a Hesiod somewhat different from the one we have just seen. The poet here appears in the garb of a professional minstrel, who asserts that he was a competitor at Chalcis in Eubœa, on the occasion of the funeral rites of a certain Amphidamas, and that he won there the prize for song. Discarding the purely fantastic tradition which later grew up about the passage, according to which Homer was his rival at Chalcis, the incident in itself is not improbable, though of small importance. What makes the tradition extremely doubtful is the character of Hesiod's poetry. Apparently this poetry would not need to submit to the exigencies of a competitive test.



A tradition, from which it is impossible to glean the truth with certainty, says that Hesiod died at Cenoë near Naupactus in Locris; and that he met his death by treachery. His body, at first cast into the sea, then thrown by the waves upon the shore, is said to have been buried for a time at Cenoë, and then transported to Orchomenos.

The ancients were no better agreed on the dates of his life than in the case of Homer. They did not even agree as to which of the two poets lived the earlier. The question is solved by the mere fact that the poetry of Hesiod appears to be the offspring of Homeric poetry. His date, therefore, cannot be placed much earlier than the eighth century. Porphyry and many others assert that he lived about the year 800.<sup>1</sup> We do not know on what their assertion was based, and so cannot judge of its value. All that we can say is that it agrees with general probability. That is, while we cannot well place it earlier, it is not reasonable to place it much later, and make Hesiod, as some have wished, contemporary with Archilochus. For Hesiod lived earlier than even the author of the *Theogony*, who names him as the great poet of the region around Mount Helicon; and we shall see that the *Theogony* could hardly have been composed much later than the beginning of the Olympiads. What we have said of Hesiod applies, however, only to the oldest parts of the *Works*. The body of Hesiodic literature comprises poetry of very diverse character, which should be distributed over two or three centuries, from the eighth to the sixth.

**3. The Poem of the *Works and Days*. Its Composition.**<sup>2</sup>—Let us consider first the leading and most truly Hesiodic poem, entitled *Works and Days* (\*Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι).

In its present state, it includes a little more than eight hundred verses. But a simple reading is enough to prove that it is an agglomeration of distinct elements. Criticism has tried, in our day, to distinguish these; but the effort has been only partly successful, because the conclusions reached are not universally accepted. This is no place to set forth and discuss the various opinions proposed.

<sup>1</sup> Hesychius of Miletus in Suidas, 'Ἡσιόδος.

<sup>2</sup> EDITIONS: Gaisford, *Hesiodi Carmina*, in his *Poetæ Græci Minores*; Götting, *Hesiodi Carmina*, Gotha, 1831; 3d ed. by J. Flach, Leipsic, 1878, with prolegomena and notes; F. Dübner, *Hesiodi Carmina et Fragmenta*, Paris, Didot, 1840; Köchly and Kinkel, *Hesiodica quæ supersunt Omnia*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1870; C. Rzach, *Hesiodi quæ feruntur Omnia*, Leipsic, 1884, text only; *The Epics of Hesiod*, with an English commentary, by F. A. Paley, London, 1861, with notes.

Consult Lehrs, *Questiones Epicæ*, Königsberg, 1837; Götting, prolegomena, *sup. cit.*; Fick, *Hesiods Gedichte*, prolegomena, Göttingen, 1887; R. Peppmüller, *Zur Composition der hesiodischen Werke und Tage* (*Jhb. f. Philol.* CLII, 1890, pp. 641-656).

Omitting as doubtful what seems most uncertain, we shall confine ourselves to a few general statements in themselves highly probable. These will suffice to give a fair idea of the way in which the Hesiodic poetry was formed, and of its character and worth.

For the first element of the agglomeration, the author seems to have obtained his theme from the judicial process above mentioned. With the later additions belonging to it, this included the first three hundred and eighty verses of the present poem. The subject treated is neither rural labor nor favorable and unfavorable days. The poem is a spirited moral sermon, *On Justice*. There is, says the poet to his brother Perses, but one useful and proper rivalry among men, that of toil. Empty quarrels always end in the ruin of those who participate in them. Better be content with half than contentious for the whole. Zeus, avenging himself on Prometheus for having deceived him, made the lot of men hard, full of vexations and illusions, and surrounded with perilous temptations. The golden was followed by the silver, and that by the bronze age; next came the age of heroes, and finally the iron age. Man's present condition is one of suffering and hard labor; and he makes it still worse by deceit, violence, and disregard of justice. Aïdos and Nemesis have almost decided to quit the earth. The mighty, like hunters who have meshed an innocent sparrow in their toils, misuse their power; but good faith and justice, offended, cry aloud for vengeance, and Zeus hears them. The just he loves and favors; their household and their fields shall prosper; their city shall dwell in peace. But the unjust he smites with dire calamity. Therefore let the mighty regard justice; for the eyes of Zeus are upon them, and their deeds are watched by thirty thousand messengers, immortal, invisible, who hover day and night above the earth. Let the humble work without seeking to despoil one another. And thus shall they find all the honor and good fortune allowed to their condition.

This is evidently a series of connected ideas, though not developed into a logical demonstration or a philosophic argument. They take on various forms in turn — maxims, allegories, myths, speeches, descriptions, expositions of religious or moral truths, bits of counsel, or prohibitions; and, being rather in juxtaposition than in intimate connection with each other, analogous thoughts not belonging to the primitive poem have one by one found their place in it. Nevertheless, the whole is not incoherent. Disregarding certain manifest additions, one can see unity of plan and inspiration. The author is taking some one to task who, wishing to grow rich by fraud, has wronged him. The feeling of his personal injury is very keen; yet he looks beyond his private wrong, using it as an individual case

from which to deduce general precepts connected with what may be called a law of humanity. This he allows us to formulate in two words, "justice" and "labor."

Such is the first great element of the agglomeration, together with its additions. The second is a poem on the various works of the field. Including several additions, it extends from v. 381 to v. 784.

This poem, *On Works*, is likewise addressed to Hesiod's brother Perses. But, as we have seen, it seems to have been composed later and under different circumstances. Perses had lost his fortune. Hesiod, partly appeased, tells him how to proceed in managing an estate. The works of the field formed for him a cycle, beginning with the end of autumn at seed-time, and ending a year later, in the following autumn, at the close of harvest. Thus the seasons pass before us in their order, winter, spring, summer, and autumn. To each belong certain works that the poet enumerates; but, as some of these are anticipated by others in earlier seasons, he goes freely, in details, beyond the portion which he professes to be treating. Hence there is apparent disorder, though without alteration of the fundamental plan. Moreover, digressions abound. All that the poet meets interests him; he speaks at length about instruments of tillage and means of constructing them, domestic economy, servants, animals, clothing, food, etc. He multiplies bits of advice drawn from experience, and traditional or personal observations. Sometimes he gives a description. Yet it is always the cycle of works which forms the plot of his development. Near the end of this poem, there is a special treatment of navigation. It is difficult to say whether this brief portion was originally distinct, or constituted, from the beginning, a natural appendage to the part on gaining a subsistence by toil. And a group of various maxims is found to-day just after the chapter on navigation. Most of them seem to have nothing in common with the primitive poem but their didactic character.

The third and last element of the agglomeration is a calendar (*ἡμέραι*), in sixty verses, enumerating and classifying the days of the month from a religious point of view, as favorable or unfavorable to certain enterprises. It has very little connection with rustic life. There is, to say the least, doubt as to whether it belonged originally to the poem. Evidently the complete poem is the result of a purely artificial grouping. It was constituted, we do not know just when, but, at the latest, in the course of the fifth century, by the combination of several poems, of which at least two were connected with Hesiod, and to which various compositions have been added. The very title is formed by the

arbitrary union of two titles really applicable to but two of its parts.

4. **The Principal Poet of the Works. His Philosophy. His Poetic Merit. His Language.**<sup>1</sup> — If now, from this whole, we take away all that is of secondary importance, and consider only the principal parts, the two poems, *On Justice* and *On Works*, we shall see in them a work of genius, and in the poet a man well worthy of characterization.

The background of his poetry is a compound of bitter complaint and energy. He regards the world as gloomy and human society as bad. The gods have made the lot of mortals hard, subjecting them to toil, danger, sickness, and death. Crowning all, they have surrounded them with temptations that cannot be resisted. This wretched condition is daily made worse by the follies of mankind. Men are selfish, greedy of pleasure, mutually hostile, always ready to deceive one another and to misuse their power. They regard neither law, the family, nor the gods. If all this be taken literally, one must admit that Hesiod lived in an atmosphere of absolute barbarism. But it is a poet, and that an irritated one, with whom we have to do. His bitter pessimism is especially evident in the poem, *On Justice*, composed, as it was, at the time when he thought himself injured and despoiled. His keen sensibility was excited by the sense of personal grievance. Anger, combined with lofty sentiment, gives him an eloquence naturally hyperbolic. Moreover, his own ideas exalt and even carry him away. Image calls up image, and old, gloomy, desolating myths form the very web of his discourse. These antique traditions, once adopted, impose themselves on him, overmaster him, shape his thought, and dictate conclusions which he can neither moderate nor soften. A certain natural severity, increased by passion or the humor of the moment, makes him take delight in short, striking formulas, which present only one aspect of things and make them so much the more startling: —

“The earth is full of ills; the sea is fraught with them.”

And he believes this when he says it. A painful and even violent sincerity, served by a strong imagination, gives to his complaint and his claims a tone that never can be forgotten.

Yet really he is by no means reduced to despair. The poem, though showing in such baldness the reign of violence and fraud,

<sup>1</sup> Consult J. Girard, *Du Sentiment religieux en Grèce*, chap. III; J. A. Hild, *Le Pessimisme moral et religieux chez Homère et Hésiode* (*Rev. de l'hist. des Relig.*, vol. XIV, p. 168 ff.; vol. XV, p. 22 f.); A. Rzsch, *Der Dialekt des Hesiodos* (*Jbb. f. cl. Philol.*, Suppl. Bd. VIII, 1876, pp. 353-466).



contains, however, the secret assertion of a profound faith in the ultimate victory of right. The poet believes that the gods are enemies of moral evil, that their eyes behold and see all that passes here below, and that in the end punishment and reward will be dispensed, bringing prosperity to some and ruin to others. We are surprised to see such absolute confidence after he has complained of everything. Just now, all seemed abominable; yet at present, all ends in good. But these brusque movements of thought, though contradictory, are characteristic of a naïve and vigorous spirit, which philosophy has not yet dominated. Each of the ideas, in turn, wholly occupies him, permitting neither attenuation nor reserve. At bottom, moral force is ruling in him. Already apparent in the poem, *On Justice*, it quite gets the upper hand in the poem, *On Works*. Hesiod still has a profound sentiment of man's inherent weakness, he knows well that the life of the peasant is rough, fatiguing, subject to a thousand pitfalls; but he knows, too, that toil, order, economy, and good conduct are certain assurances of success. All his precepts indicate firm confidence in the worth of intelligent and persevering activity. He leaves no doubt that the gods favor their worshippers — provided, of course, that in turn, the latter perform the duties required of them. No longer compelled, in this poem, to contend against violence and falsity, his thought is no longer dominated by passion. As the pronounced adversary of idleness and carelessness, while making war on these, he reveals his true philosophy. This is chiefly one of courage and faith. For centuries Greece took from him lessons of activity, prudence, piety, and moral energy.

This stanch doctrine, based withal on experience and good sense, is maintained with remarkable poetic power. The author possesses force, a vein of satire, clearness of imagination, and grace, sometimes piquant, sometimes spirited and ingenious. In complaint or invective, if he lacks abundance of words, he atones for it by bitterness and harsh gravity, liveliness of emotion and religious tone. Actually suffering from the evils he depicts, he is in some respects one of the greatest poets of human misery. He has expressed its sentiments in verses that are lamentations and cries of pain. Though he speaks thus with all his heart, he has a natural tone of authority, as if feeling himself the interpreter of majestic truths. The decided turn of his sayings makes them seem like oracles. No profane writer has made men feel more keenly the presence of an inspiration which he himself regarded as divine and which Greece long accepted as being such.

These are the main qualities that give him grandeur. He has

lesser ones, but they do not make him original. Like the Ionic bards, he is a story-teller by natural endowment, though with slightly different traits. He has their adroit frankness, their quick and clear imagination, their acumen, and their dramatic feeling. He is their inferior in ease of eloquence, in variety of invention, in fancy; but he redeems himself by the quantity of sense he puts into his work. In brief, he makes us see and hear Zeus and Prometheus dealing with each other, each seeking to deceive the other; one would think them a rich merchant and a priest of Cyme disputing over the value of a sacrifice. To create Pandora, he naïvely assembles the gods; he shows them to us plotting, each in turn, with their gifts carefully chosen. These he does not describe; he merely indicates them with a proper term. He puts before us the living image of the woman, as he conceives her, charming and dangerous, seductive alike by her acumen and her beauty, voluptuous and perfidious. When enumerating the ages of the world, he characterizes them briefly, one after another; and each of his descriptions attracts us and makes us think. With a few verses he can put into one description a dream of lost happiness, into another a gloomy yet attractive sadness, into a third a quick vision of terror, and into a fourth a wonderful picture of the great adventures of the epic period. He retains his lively and pungent style even in allegory. When he depicts the two Strifes, Jealousy and Emulation, the sketches are so real that we see summarized in bold relief something of the life of human beings.

But his piquant grace is seen especially in the form of his technical and moral precepts. For the simplest matters, even those somewhat trivial, he has original and ingenious forms of expression. In his counsels all is animated and precise, all speaks to the imagination. He sees and portrays vividly the things he treats. His every recommendation frames itself spontaneously like a picture:—

“Pray to Zeus of the lower world, pray to holy Demeter, asking that at the end of thy toil the sacred harvest may fill thy garner: do so when thou beginnest thy labor, as soon as, putting thy hand to the plough, thou touchest the back of the oxen that draw at the oaken beam. Just behind thee, let a servant, equipped with a mattock, raise trouble for the birds by covering the seed. Toil is a great blessing to mortals; but sloth is a great curse.”—*Works*, vv. 465–472.

Such precepts could be easily illustrated, owing to the nature of his plan. He brings men into view and groups them, noting their attitudes and motions, yet not forgetting their sentiments. Thus the most technical reflections acquire life. The poet may wish to say that sluggish toil will bring but a meagre harvest: he sees the

harvester deceived; he shows us in three or four strokes the fruitlessness of his toil; he presents him disappointed and contemptuous:—

“If thou wait till the solstice to till the divine earth, seated upon the earth, thou shalt reap spare heads of wheat; covered with dust, thou shalt bind thy petty sheaves, sad at heart, and shalt carry all thy grain in a basket. Few shall be they who praise thee.” — *Works*, vv. 479–482.

The moralist in the poet suggests at every instant traits of excellence. He reads the heart of his ploughman; he notes and shares his emotions. But he has more general observations; for he ponders everything. His experience of life, though not that of a philosopher, is already well turned to profit:—

“Place behind thy oxen a man of forty years, interested in his task, who will plough a straight furrow, not seeking to look at his companions, but constantly attending to his work. A younger man will be less efficient in scattering the seed and destroying thistles. The young man thinks only of rejoining his companions. His interest is in the air.” — *Works*, vv. 441–447.

We may add that even where there is no need of observation or of images, he still knows how to win acceptance for his precepts by exquisite expression, designedly enigmatic turn, and striking cast of thought. But these are petty details, on which we need not insist.

Beside moral and technical lessons, nature cannot fail to have great importance in a rustic poem. Hesiod has a sentiment very much his own, which to modern readers may appear somewhat harsh; yet it possesses gracious, delicate charm. He does not dream, he has no flights of fancy. Nature, as he conceives it, presents but few great spectacles; and he quite disregards those that she does offer, such as mountains, forests, great, peaceful lakes, torrents, and shores beaten by the waves. His horizon is chosen in the plain, or possibly on the slope. He points out the fields that are tilled and harvested, the small, rustic domain, the adjoining vineyard; and, in this horizon he never lets his mind study out the mysterious, nor delight itself in the secret harmonies so ready to establish themselves between the aspects of nature and human sentiment. Engrossed with toil from a practical standpoint, he loves the earth, not for its beauty, but for its fertility; and if he appreciates the field highly, he does so from the point of view of the harvest alone. This does not seem truly poetic; and yet there is in him the sincere poesy of nature. It is the poesy of the peasant, yet it is idealized. It is made up of trivial impressions and observations, vivid, clear, exact; and with them is mingled the sentiment of hardship or that of well-being. These observations touch all that

one sees and hears, all that one notices out of doors in summer or winter. Hesiod understands and notes picturesquely the tokens of each approaching season. He has seen the Pleiads rise and set in their time, he has heard the cry of the birds of passage betokening spring or winter. Summer, for him, is when the thistle blossoms. He has felt the parching heat of dog-days and the penetrating chill of Thracian winds. The picturesque reality of certain details of his daily experience is charming:—

“Should mishap make thee tardy in thy labor, thou mayst perchance still amend thy lot. When the cuckoo is heard chanting among the oak leaves, delighting from far the men at work on the vast earth, tell then thy wish to Zeus that he cause rain on the third day, and that he cease only when the water covers the ox’s hoof; for so the laborer behind the time may yet surpass his neighbor.”—*Works*, vv. 485–490.

Such traits abound in the *Works*. Nature is shown in her petty details, it is true; but the observations of the poet are so well chosen, so just, so sincere, that it is impossible not to be pleased by them. Behind his hasty sketches there is always an interesting sentiment, that of a man for whom rain and fair weather are notable events, who suffers from cold and heat, who looks to the sun for his daily bread, who labors strenuously behind the plough, and rests comfortably in the shade, refreshed with drink, when he allows himself a moment of repose.

And now a word concerning the diction of the poem. The language, as we have it, is a natural use of the Ionic epic dialect, with an admixture of occasional forms borrowed from the dialects of central Greece. In our day some have supposed that this state of things resulted from an artificial transposition, a deliberate transcription from primitive Bæotian or Loerian into Ionic. But when one tries to restore the primitive text from this point of view, one finds that it will not endure the operation. Only by violence can it be turned back into the pretended original form. Therefore the hypothesis in question seems unacceptable. Furthermore, it is uncalled for, since the admixture we have noted is already well enough explained.

**5. Other Moral and Technical Poems.**<sup>1</sup>—There is no doubt that a rather large number of poems, more or less analogous to those we have just been discussing, were produced in continental Greece from the eighth century till the end of the sixth. We know only a small number of them, even by title, though possibly many others existed.

<sup>1</sup> Consult G. Marckscheffel, *Hesiodi Fragmenta*, Leipsic, 1840; Kinkel, *Poetarum Epicorum Fragmenta*, I.



Several of them have been attributed to Hesiod. It is impossible to-day to decide, in every case, whether this assignment is right or wrong. All we can say is that in remote antiquity there is very little evidence in its favor: for a goodly number of poets, after Hesiod, devoted themselves to didactic composition.

The most celebrated of these poems are: the *Great Works* (Μεγάλα Ἔργα), of which we have a few fragments and whose vague title has been variously interpreted; the *Divination by Birds* (Ὀρνιθομαντεία), wholly lost; the *Astronomy*, represented to-day by some twenty fragments; and the *Precepts of Chiron* (Χείρωνος Ὑποθήκαι), a group of moral maxims that the centaur Chiron was thought to have formulated for the young Achilles. The last-named poem does not seem very ancient, for it discusses the age when children ought to learn to read. In all there are eight verses of it. But none of these works, in their present condition, is worthy to occupy our attention long.

Disregarding, then, the first type of didactic poetry, which aims to give moral or technical instruction, we may now turn to the second, which has a closer resemblance to history.

**6. The *Theogony*.<sup>1</sup> Subject of the Poem. Its Unity and Composition. The Author and the Date.** — The poem that marks the appearance of this semi-historic poetry in literature is the *Theogony* attributed to Hesiod.

The aim of the *Theogony* is to give a methodic exposition of the interrelations of the gods from the origin of matter to the final constitution of the celestial world. The author does not invent, nor wish to invent. He collected traditions that were divergent, confused, and sometimes contradictory. These he harmonized and reconciled, fusing them into one great whole. His evident intention was to give a genealogical account of all the gods of the Greek world so as to fix their mutual relations. Accordingly he mounts above the level of a mere canton or region in the desire to construct a really Hellenic pantheon. And such is his product. His inspiration is drawn from a deep piety and a keen historical sense. While honoring the gods, he succeeds in perpetuating the most essential traditions in the history of his race. To be sure, we cannot say that he was the first to make such an attempt. We are rather inclined to regard the *Theogony* as the product or result of a series of less successful efforts. At any rate, its appearance overshadows all that

<sup>1</sup> For a General Bibliography of Hesiod's work, see pp. 62 and 64. On the *Theogony* in particular, Guignaut, *De la Théogonie d'Hésiode*, Paris, 1835; Schematta, *Orientalia Academica*, II, Berlin, 1857; F. G. Welcker, *Theogonia*, Elberfeld, 1856; F. v. Gossler and Schöten, *zur hesiodischen Theogonie*, with 122. log. mena, Leipzig, 1876; G. Hermann, *Oxygonia*, VIII, 1877.

had gone before, because it surpassed all the rest in merit and so rendered them useless. It alone represents for us the great effort of Greek genius before the coming of history or philosophy to condense and fix scattered and divergent mythological traditions.

The composition of the poem shows the difficulty of the task and the intensity of the effort necessary. In its present state it has somewhat more than a thousand verses. One cannot doubt that it was interpolated and supplemented in certain parts. But beneath these superficial changes, which, after all, are matters of discussion, one can but recognize an underlying unity. This is due to the method with which the plan is conceived and followed, and to the spirit that animates the whole. The method consists essentially in following the order of generations. When a single generation includes several brothers and sisters, the poet, after naming them, gives the lineage of each in succession, following the order of primogeniture. The exceptions are rare and easy to explain. The spirit of the work is scientific and philosophic, in so far as these expressions can be applied to so remote an age; and it is also Hellenic. It is scientific in that the poet is given above all to exactness and precision and attaches but little importance to the narratives; philosophic in that, with all his science, he displays, through the succession of gods, the idea of a development of the world into harmony and beauty; and Hellenic in that he never limits himself to local cults, but represents all the divinities as universal.

Let us take a cursory glance at the development of the plot. The *Theogony* begins with a prologue of more than a hundred verses, apparently formed of elements brought together gradually and in some disorder. To disentangle the skein properly may not be possible to-day. Yet if we select the elements that seem most ancient (vv. 18, 22-34, 104-115), we obtain, by recombining them, a logical and interesting account. The poet invokes the Muses of Helicon who formerly inspired Hesiod, and says that he himself has likewise received from them a mission; instead of fictions he will set forth verities. They have commissioned him to put into verse the generations of the gods; and this shall be his task.

He commences with the origin of things. In the beginning, he says, there was only chaos, by which he means the void. Then was produced Gæa (Earth), resting upon Tartarus, which lay stretched beneath it. With Gæa was also produced Eros, the most beautiful of immortals. This signifies plainly that from the earth as the sole primordial existence came forth successively all the gods; and that their successive generations were produced by the power of Eros, the god of conjugal affection. From chaos sprang directly two

beings — Erebus, a dim obscurity, and Night, obscurity somewhat localized. From Erebus and Night sprang Ether, dim daylight, and Day, light localized. Impalpable and unsubstantial, these beings might all issue from the void which the poet has called chaos. From Gæa sprang directly Uranus, the sky, the visible, colored vault conceived as a sort of superstructure over the earth. She produced also the mountains and Pontus, the deep. This, as one readily sees, is an elementary cosmogony, a sort of genesis, a precursor of the *Theogony* proper.

The latter begins with the union of Gæa and Uranus. The offspring of this union were the Titans, the Cyclopes, and the hundred-handed giants, Cottus, Briareus, and Gyes, who seem to represent the violence of the winds. The group of brothers all have something in common; all are symbolic of the rude forces of nature. Cronus, the youngest of the Titans, at the instigation of his mother, Gæa, cast a net to catch his father, Uranus, and then wounded him. From the blood of Uranus sprang the Erinnyes, the giants, the nymphs, and finally Aphrodite.

For the purposes of the poet, the first generation sprung from Gæa is thus exhausted. Then come the families of the Titans in the order of primogeniture. It is in this part of the poem that the enumerations are longest and most intricate. Alliances between the different families compel the poet to speak of them sometimes in common. Yet he follows his plan as much as possible. The descendants of Cronus come last, because Cronus is the youngest of the Titans. They interest us most, inasmuch as, with them, we enter upon a mythology that is almost historic. The sons of Cronus are, in fact, Hades, Poseidon, and Zeus. We learn how Zeus, when his father wished to swallow him, was saved by his mother Rhea, and grew up to deliver his brothers. Then we see him master of Olympus. The overthrow of Cronus, however, has nowhere been recounted.

Among the families of the Titans the poet has reserved that of Iapetus. He now returns to it. The sons of Iapetus are Prometheus, Epimetheus, and Atlas. In connection with them we are told the enterprise of Prometheus, which Zeus thwarted; and the creation of Pandora—a story showing us humanity vanquished and submissive.

With no transition we pass then to the war of the Titans against the gods. This lack of continuity may be due to a lacuna. As for the war itself, that is necessarily mentioned here; for it is the defeat of the Titans which explains why their families suddenly come to an end, leaving free scope henceforth to the descendants of Cronus.

The surprising thing is the importance given to the war. Already we find the story of Pandora distinct from the genealogic character of the poem as a whole. The tale of the combat of Zeus and the Titans has much more this episodic character, even if regarded as a probable addition. No doubt, once freed from the long nomenclatures of the beginning, the poet was pleased to give to this later portion of his work more of life and elegance. The vanquished Titans were hurled into Tartarus; and this account furnishes the poet occasion for a series of descriptions, of which only a small part seem primitive.

Gæa, the mother of the Titans, to avenge her sons, bears a monster, Typhœus, who renews the struggle against Zeus. Here there is another and final description. Typhœus is plunged into Tartarus; and from him spring destroying and devastating winds. Having vanquished him, Zeus is undisputed master of Olympus, and shares the divine power with his brothers.

The poem ends with an account of the amours of Zeus and other Olympic deities, with goddesses and mortal women. The lines of Olympic descent end, accordingly, with the heroes, and there meet the legends of Homeric poetry.

One can see from this outline that there is a logical purpose running through the great work, and that its plan must have been formed by a single mind. The original unity, apart from the additions, must therefore be recognized and acknowledged. We are at once in the presence of an author whose personality it would be interesting to understand. Unfortunately, it is no more apparent in this poem than in the *Works*. The poet here performs the function of an interpreter of traditions; he has nothing to say of himself, and tells us nothing except in the prologue (vv. 22-34). This unique passage, rightly interpreted, indicates that he is not Hesiod, but that his date is later. He is an admirer of Hesiod, for he also receives his inspiration from the Muses of Helicon, and seems likewise to address a rustic public; but he differs in respect to his vocation, which is to relate the past, and he differs from the Homeric bards in that he cultivates truth instead of fiction. All this denotes a poet conscious of his purpose, one who knows the importance of his mission and feels its force. That is about all we can say of him.

The time in which he lived can be determined only approximately. He does not seem much later than Hesiod, as Hesiod is the only poet in the region of Mount Helicon whom he knows. His story of the battle between Zeus and the Titans gives the impression of a first attempt to handle the subject. Eumelus of Corinth composed a *Titanomachy*, as we shall see later, in the second half of the eighth



century. If his poem had been already known, doubtless the author of the *Theogony* — supposing that he had decided to relate in the form of an episode what already existed as a poem — would have brought into fuller relief certain of the personages and scenes of the earlier work. We must note also that, though Dionysus is hurriedly mentioned at the end of the poem (vv. 941–942, 947–949), the legend about him does not yet seem to have been widely current. These observations hardly allow us to suppose that the author lived after the middle of the eighth century, or, we may say, after the beginning of the Olympiads.

**7. Merit of the *Theogony*. Its Diction.**<sup>1</sup> — A poem largely made up of nomenclatures can have literary merit of a special kind only. The *Theogony* must have pleased its contemporaries above all by its composition. It offered, under a form relatively short and well arranged, a complete history of the creation of the world. Thus presented, this was easy to grasp at a glance. Men had the pleasure of seeing themselves readily reflected in it. Then, though it did not clearly set forth an idea of progress, it suggested such an evolution. Men seemed to see, in the successive generations of divine beings, something else than hazard and confusion. They passed from nothing to existence, from violent force to better-regulated energy, to beauty from monstrosity, to light from primitive darkness. This was like an act of intelligence, and the dimly apparent act gave to the series of enumerations a sort of dramatic interest.

Moreover, in matters of detail these very nomenclatures did not lack character. The poet, in grouping his divinities, was able to give to most of the families he named a striking and distinct aspect. Even his choice of names and epithets, his arrangement of consonants, his few brief indications, sufficed for that. To the charming group of the Nereids, he opposed the horrible group of the children of Phoreys. The second child of Night has a peculiar interest on account of its symbolic value. The progeny of Echidna and Typhon terrifies the imagination. This whole mythology, in short, was vivid and lifelike in its infinite variety. The author had not evoked it unimaginatively; he had had a real vision; his emotion had been variously stirred by it; and he had communicated that emotion to his public.

It must be said, too, that here and there on this basis of nomenclature, detached episodes break the monotony in a pleasing way. The poet's sense of propriety had distributed them nicely, and prop-

<sup>1</sup> Consult J. Girard, *Sentiment religieux en Grèce*, as above; A. Rzsch, *Der Dialekt des Hesiodos* (Abh. f. cl. Philol., Suppl. Bd. VIII, 1876, 353 sqq.).

erly regulated their length. Somewhat rare in the beginning, they become more frequent and more extensive as one proceeds. We have the conspiracy of Gæa and her sons against Cronus, the story of the sons of Iapetus, the creation of Pandora, the Titanomachy, the description of Tartarus, and the strife between Zeus and Typhœus. Antique simplicity is joined with grandeur of imagination. The picture of the combat of Zeus against the Titans, a struggle which shook the universe, is related in the middle of the work, with a spirit comparable only to that in the Homeric poems. The charm was what men found so admirable, even while the poem instructed them. The author seemed to take pleasure ordinarily in concealing his genius. He would voluntarily let it deal with petty matters, and then suddenly allow it to burst forth. The type of composition he created was of moderate pretensions, very inferior to the great epics, inferior even to the very personal poetry of the *Works*; but in this type he showed himself an artist, and at times raised his work to the dignity of a masterpiece.

The diction in the *Theogony* shows the same mixed character as that in the *Works*. On the whole, it is Ionic, imitative of that in the Homeric epics; but, as in the *Works*, one feels the influence of the dialects of central Greece. Traces of the Delphic dialect seem particularly noticeable. If this were more certain, it would be an interesting indication, tending to throw some light on the origin of this curious effort at systematizing and fixing mythology. But it would really be premature to base a conjecture of any importance on indications still so vague.

8. Other Genealogical Hesiodic Poems. The *Catalogues*, the *Eoïæ*, the *Ægimius*, etc. Detached Episodes: the *Shield of Heracles*, etc.<sup>1</sup>—The *Theogony* has continued to be the chief specimen of this semi-historic poetry, just as it was, probably, one of its first models. But to the same inspiration is due a great number of other poems that seem, in general, to have been produced a little later, and that were likewise early attributed to Hesiod, who had become the representative didactic writer.

The most important of these poems was the *Catalogue of Women*. We have only fragments of it. Whoever was the author, he gave in chronological order the names of the women who had been loved by the gods and who had given birth to celebrated heroes. It was, therefore, a sort of methodic classification of the great heroic families that traced their lineage to divine ancestors. These *Catalogues* formed, as it were, an extension of the *Theogony* into human life, and through this extension mythology made its transition into

<sup>1</sup> General Bibliography of Hesiod, p. 64.

history. The part played by the women in the poem was not, as has sometimes been supposed, due to local custom. It ceased to be petty the moment the author chose to mount to the divine origin of great families. The general form of the work, as far as we can judge from its fragments, must have been much like that of the *Theogony*. Long nomenclatures, enlivened by interesting epithets, commemorations, and allusions, and diversified from time to time by descriptions or episodic narratives, made up a poem that would please from the number of its details; but the poem interested its hearers, and later its readers, especially as a historic document. Here were the heroic archives of Greece, disentangled, set in order, methodically arranged under a form attractive and easy to remember. Hence, in later days, even when history had begun to attain importance, the *Catalogues* were still regarded as one of the most ancient and precious evidences relative to the origin of the race. It is, to be sure, no longer possible to give the poem a precise date. Yet, in the nature of things, it must have been later than the *Theogony*. Various passages confirm this conclusion, such as the transformation of the hero Latinus, who is no longer, as in the *Theogony* (v. 1013), a son of Circe and apparently childless, but a grandson of Deucalion, a brother of Græcus, and the ancestor of the Latins (fr. 24). The influence of the *Catalogues* can certainly be seen in lyric poetry as early as the end of the seventh century, particularly in Stesichorus (*Catalogues*, fr. 117). We may suppose, therefore, that the poem was composed about the beginning of the seventh century.

Closely connected with the *Catalogues* are the *Eoïæ* (Ἑοῖαι). When these various poems were collected into volumes, the *Eoïæ* formed the fourth book of the *Catalogues*. They were, in fact, a very similar enumeration. The poet recounts in the beginning that a certain number of privileged women had been the favorites of the gods; and he passes the most illustrious of them in review in a series of short lays. The first one was introduced by the formula *Such as* (ὡς), the others by the formula *Or else such as* (ἢ ὡς), again and again repeated. Thus arose the strange title, which was given to the poem, we do not know just when. Only a few fragments remain. The most important one, relating to Alemena, has some fifty verses; it serves to-day as a prologue to the *Shield of Heracles*.

From this specimen one would judge that the poems were no more truly narrative than the *Catalogues*. The author of the later poem did not, like the author of the earlier one, aim to be complete. He had preferred, among the legends relating to women, those that seemed most likely to interest; and these he had developed more

amply. There is good reason for thinking that this poem was composed shortly after the appearance of the *Catalogues*.

The *Ægimius*, attributed now to Hesiod, now to Cercops of Miletus, who is placed in the sixth century, derives its name from King Ægimius, the ancestor and first legislator of the Dorians. Some fragments, of which several are assigned, though only hypothetically, to this poem, do not enable us to determine with certainty its theme. But at any rate, the title indicates its connection with the origin of the Doric race.

All these various works seem to have been more or less genealogical in character. Some few other compositions, likewise attributed to Hesiod, yet without more conclusive reasons, were mere lays detached from this store of legend. One might name as examples the *Melampody*, of which we have a very few fragments; the three poems on the *Dactyls of Mount Ida*, on the *Marriage of Peleus and Thetis*, and on the *Descent of Theseus to Hades*, of which we know almost nothing; and finally, the *Shield of Heracles*, which has been preserved to the present time.

The last poem, in four hundred and eighty verses, may serve to exemplify the type. Setting aside the prologue, which is a lay of the *Eoiæ* relative to Alcmena, the mother of Heracles, there remains the narrative of the hero's strange combat against Cygnus, son of Ares. Within this is contained, as in a frame, the long description of the *Shield of Heracles*, which has given its name to the whole poem. Even the idea of this description is borrowed from the *Iliad*; for the shield of Heracles recalls that of Achilles, and the influence of Homer on the Hesiodic poet is shown in numerous imitations of detail. But the very resemblance makes the difference between the two schools more striking. Here the description is too much burdened with detail. It lacks the charming Ionic ease which wins such ready acceptance for the episode of Book XVIII. In many passages we find force and grandeur, and sometimes vivid and interesting realism; but there is exaggeration also, with an effort to present the horrible, which excites disgust rather than pleasure. The principal action is treated summarily, and the invention is mediocore. Such a production cannot well be placed elsewhere than at the end of the epic period, when imitation was becoming the all-important element of poesy.

**9. Lesser Writers of Genealogical Poetry.**<sup>1</sup>—In the class with Hesiod, antiquity counted a certain number of other historic poets, such as Eumelus of Corinth, Cinæthion of Lacedæmon, Carcinus of

<sup>1</sup> The remains of their works are given with the fragments of Hesiod. See the bibliographies on pp. 62 and 64, and Kinkel, *Poetarum Epicorum Fragmenta*, I.



Naupactus, Chersias of Orchomenos, and Asius of Samos. A few words will suffice to assign to them their approximate dates, and so establish the continuity of the type of composition.

Eumelus, a Corinthian of the great family of the Bacchiades, appears to have lived in the second half of the eighth century.<sup>1</sup> Various historic poems now lost were attributed to him, of which the most important, entitled the *Corinthiaca*, manifestly treated of the origins of his native city. As for the *Europia*, the *Titanomachy*, the *Bougonny*, the *Return of the Greeks*, and the *Processional Chant* (*Ἄσμα προσόδιον*) cited under his name, we can say nothing certain.

Cinaethon of Lacedæmon, to whom is assigned almost the same date,<sup>2</sup> is said to be the author of a genealogical poem without special title, which appears to have been his principal work. To him are attributed also a *Telegony*, a *Heraclea*, an *Œdipody*, and even the *Little Iliad*, in connection with Lesches of Mitylene, of whom we have already spoken.

Carcinus of Naupactus is named by Pausanias alone (X, 38, 11) as the author of a poem frequently cited, called the *Chants of Naupactus*. The fragments show that it was an epic akin in general form to the Hesiodic *Eoie*. The women of the heroic legend, and Medea particularly, were celebrated in it.

Asius of Samos is better known as an elegiac poet, and we shall speak of him in connection with the elegy. Yet he belongs to the series of historic poets because he wrote some genealogies in verse, mentioned by Pausanias (IV, 2, 1). He seems to have lived in the seventh century. The most interesting of his fragments (fr. 13, Kinkel) has to do with the customs of the Samians.

Chersias of Orchomenos, cited by the pseudo-Plutarch<sup>3</sup> as a contemporary of Periander (end of the seventh century), is for us a mere name, with which no exact statement is connected.

The purpose of this dry enumeration is to lead us to the sixth century, when we see the first traces of history proper, which began with slightly modified prose transcriptions of genealogical poems. Accordingly, there is a direct affiliation, which it is necessary to point out with clearness.

The fact is that the two great forms of didactic poetry were fused into two different literary types, which absorbed them. The moral and technical poem yielded its content to the elegy; and the genealogical poem to history. This does not mean that neither had had, in its time, its reason for existence; but their short duration

<sup>1</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromates*, I, 144, Sylburg.

<sup>2</sup> Jerome, *Chronicle of Eusebius*, ad Ol. IV, 2 (763 B.C.).

<sup>3</sup> *Banquet of the Seven Sages*, p. 156 f. of the *Moralia*.

causes us to suspect that between their matter and their form there was not the deep, complete unity observable in the case of epic. For in them, the matter,—reason, realism, observation, it may be, and method,—so far from demanding the ample, pompous form of epic verse, merely employed this for the moment as a means of acquiring popularity, because it was then fashionable. But in fact, its real nature was prosaic; and more or less rapidly it tended to become prose.

## CHAPTER VI

### LYRIC POETRY: GENERAL FEATURES

1. Causes of the Development of Lyric Poetry. 2. Its Essential Characteristics.
3. The First Type of Dignified Lyric: the Nome. Olympus and Terpander.
4. Semi-lyrical Forms: the Elegy and the Iamb. 5. The Strictly Lyric Forms.

**1. Causes of the Development of Lyric Poetry.**—We have already seen that different forms of poetry designed to be chanted had been in use in Greece from the most remote period, and that mention of them is made in the Homeric poems. These are on the one hand, chants pertaining to the ceremonies of a cult, or *hymns*; and on the other, chants adapted to the great events of human life; funeral dirges, or *threnodies*; nuptial chants, or *hymeneals*; chants of thanksgiving, or *pæans*; and rustic chants such as the *Ælinos*, a lamentation for the death of the beautiful Linos, who was smitten by the fatal arrows of Apollo.

But during long centuries, this branch of poetry produced no real literary work. Its character was of wholly popular simplicity. Beginning with old, traditional airs, sometimes of foreign origin it may be, and with short monotonous musical phrases, village bards, professional mourners, or rustic musicians improvised a few simple words, broken at regular intervals by a refrain which their audience sang in chorus. Even in the sanctuaries, the hymns of the sacred bards must have been more like simple litanies than odes. All real artists turned to epic. The story of the exploits of Odysseus and Achilles formed the favorite theme of inspired, cultured minstrels. And step by step they brought narrative poetry to a high degree of perfection and brilliance, whereas lyric poetry shone only with the dim light of a wholly instinctive art. It lived from hand to mouth, and its works of improvisation disappeared, leaving no trace behind them.

But in the beginning of the eighth century, at about the time of the first Olympiads, the relation of the ~~two~~ great forms of poetry was modified. The epic was beginning to die out, and the lyric poem came to its full splendor. It is the commencement of a new

epoch of about three centuries whose great literary names were to be those of lyric poets, whereas the works conceived in imitation of Homer and Hesiod were to become, more and more, rare and mediocre. The epic period was giving way to the lyric. It was an important literary transformation which, as always in Greece, had its roots in a corresponding reformation of customs and of public spirit.

Lyric poetry, as expressing a personal or collective, but always present, emotion, in order to be really literary would seem to demand a greater moral and intellectual maturity than simple epic narrative. Primitive minds, like those of children, have no great imaginative interest in the world of reality. They are content to be influenced by it, without considering it as a matter of art. When they wish to give play to their imagination, they take refuge in a realm of dreams which they project into a transfigured past. They have, indeed, moments of strong emotion; but capacity for emotion does not necessitate its expression in poetry. Then, too, there must be the capacity to observe the emotion from without, so to speak, and take an artistic interest in it. The Greeks in the time of Homer felt an artistic emotion over the passions of an Achilles or the misfortunes of an Odysseus; but for the happiness or unhappiness of their own life, a cry of joy or sorrow, a prayer to a divinity, a monotonous refrain, like the moaning of the wounded man, sufficed for the expression of sentiments which they were not able to regard objectively. And the general emotions, which play so considerable a part in the Greek lyric, were rarer and feebler than now. Men did not often stop to analyze them, hardly comprehending that the world of reality might be made the subject of a work of art.

It was not till the beginning of the eighth century that the Greek mind passed out of this stage in its moral life, abandoning long childish reveries about a poetic ideal of the past to attempt the conquest of the present real world. The transformation is seen in every phase of life, but notably in politics. The city took the place of the old patriarchal kingdom. The individual became his own master. His obedience to law was a voluntary compliance of his will with the common will of all, a sentiment of discipline and solidarity which presupposes in the members of the community a capacity for self-government and self-possession. The city in return, as the product of the energy of individuals, strengthened and increased that energy through the daily exercise on their part of political functions. For minds thus trained, real life took on new value and interest. Men came to be passionately attached to it. They strove for its improvement and sought to comprehend it. They found in it the source of



a thousand emotions, and these they were interested in watching and describing. Then it was that they were ripe for lyric poetry.

The occasions for such emotion were singularly multiplied. To those that once had come and still continued to come from the incidents of private life, others were added by the new political conditions. An intense community life, such as the Homeric age could not have thought possible, brought together the thousands of souls composing the city, and taught them to live harmoniously in a multitude of circumstances. This gave rise to new sentiments — new at least in intensity — and to numerous occasions for manifesting them in common. Civic patriotism was ardent and universal, playing its part in religion, in pan-Hellenic festivals, in splendid games, in curiosity about the old legends, in the traditional cultivation of epic poetry. It was present, as an animating force, throughout the social organism. It gave rise to pompous panegyrics, through which it was communicated to the outside world. The relish for life in common multiplied banquets and reunions of every sort. All these sentiments needed an organ, a voice, for their expression.

This means was furnished by lyric poetry. It became more complete and effective, that it might discharge its new functions. At first it made numerous acquisitions to its music, indigenous or exotic. It perfected its instruments, both flutes and citharas. It developed its rhythms. It made use of new musical scales. It extended the phases of its melody. It enhanced the size and flexibility of its dancing choruses. Above all, from a literary point of view, it underwent a thorough transformation at the hands of a throng of great artists, who gradually formulated its poetic system; that is, the rules governing the invention of its motives, the composition of its poems, and the style of expression for its ideas. One may perhaps say that the literary reform was the most important of all. Whatever the difference between the music of the old popular chants and the melodies of an Aleman or a Stesichorus, it is evident that the difference was still greater between the artless prattle of these old songs and the supple, intricate productions of a thought which incorporated in lyric forms all the art of analysis and expression that had been evolved during three or four centuries of epic poetry.

**2. Essential Characteristics of Lyric Poetry.** — We need not here enter minutely into the difficult problems of the technical construction of a Greek lyric poem. Greek music is very little understood. Scholars discuss even the rhythm in the poetry of Pindar or Bacchylides without arriving at any certain conclusion. Only the literary form of lyric poetry can be determined from the examples still pre-

served. Without tarrying over obscure and controverted matters, we must get, at the beginning, some idea of the characteristics of Greek lyric works and see how they differ from what we call lyric in modern literature.<sup>1</sup>

Greek lyric poetry was composed to be chanted to the accompaniment of instruments. It is sometimes chanted, not by a single voice, but by a chorus; and the chorus is now stationary, and now in motion. Its movements are marches or regular dances. So in lyric poetry, when complete, words, music, and dancing combine to produce the whole effect. Their uniting bond — the soul, so to speak, animating the body composed of these three elements — is rhythm. It determines the movement of dance, music, and poetry.

Of the elements thus associated, poetry is the predominant one. Hence its rôle differs from the rôle it plays in modern opera. Among us, when poetry is associated with music, the music is ordinarily predominant, and the poetry becomes subordinate. The difference is inherent in the nature of Greek music; and of this we must now speak.

Greek music, in comparison with ours, has always been extremely simple; and this simplicity is particularly marked in the period from the eighth to the fifth centuries. It habitually employed only stringed instruments such as the cithara, and wind instruments such as the flute. But the cithara, a sort of portable harp without a foot-board, lacked sonorousness, and was incapable of shading its tones. Its sole merit — yet the great one in the eyes of the Greeks — was that of giving out very pure tones, so that it marked the rhythm distinctly. The flute, though wider in range and more expressive, was in ill repute among the severer moralists on account of these attractive qualities. It does not seem highly impassioned except by comparison with the meagre cithara; for in the beginning, at least, it was merely a sort of clarinet, but with fewer high notes than ours. The simplicity of the airs corresponded with that of the instrument. In general, they had but a small number of notes. It is said that, till the time of Terpander, the Greeks had only four strings in the cithara. What is more certain is that, after Terpander, there never were more than eight. In the beginning, each district of Greece had

<sup>1</sup> For the technique of Greek rhythm, consult Rossbach und Westphal, *Theorie der musischen Kunst der Hellenen*, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1885-1889; Christ, *Metrik der Griechen und Römer*; Schmidt, *Kunstformen der griechischen Poesie*, 4 vols., Leipsic, 1868; *Ibid.*, *An Introduction to the Rhythmic and Metric of the Classical Languages*, trans. by John Williams White, Boston, 1880; Goodell, *Chapters on Greek Metric*, New York, 1902; P. Masqueray, *Traité de Métrique grecque*, Paris, Kliencksieck, 1899; A. Croiset, *Poésie de Pindare*, pp. 24-161.

its own musical scale or mode, characterized by the place of the semitone and the tonic in the gamut. Gradually the different scales became the common patrimony of all Greeks, each offering to the artist its own resources for the expression of sentiment. The Dorian and the Phrygian were the principal modes, one more severe, the other more passionate. Whatever the number and variety of these modes, they never gave rise to any melodies whose scheme was other than elementary. Furthermore, the simple melodies were not enriched and sustained by the resources of harmony, for that was almost unknown among the Greeks. Instruments and voices were generally in unison, though sometimes two groups were an octave apart. The harmony was limited to a few rare chords in the accompaniment.

It is easy to see that neither the soft-toned instruments nor the simple melodies were likely to drown the voice of the singer. The rhythm of the music, instead of obscuring, rather sustained the voice, by following the natural rhythm of the words. The strong and weak accents of the music generally correspond to the long and short syllables of the language. And in the chant, these kept their ordinary length and shortness. The verses or metres, that is, the measured form of words designed for the chant, brought before the ancient reader, without change, the exact rhythm of the music. If we can no longer find this expressed in the words, it is because we have lost some of the principles of the art. Yet we can almost always get a partial view, as at least the general characteristics of Greek rhythm are still known. Since the rhythm, in the judgment of the Greeks, was an essential part of their lyric poetry, even more expressive than the melody proper, and since the preserved works of their poets retain it in the arrangement of the verses, we must try to set forth its essential features.

What determines the character of Greek rhythm is, above all, the time relation between the arsis and the thesis of each foot or measure. This relation is one of equality in the dactylic rhythm (—), of one to two in the iambic (—), and of two to three in the pæonic (—). The dactylic rhythms have more of calm and noble seriousness, and the pæonic more of excited agitation; while the iambic have an intermediate character. Moreover, the Greeks made a very marked difference in each kind of rhythm between the feet that begin with a long syllable and those that begin with a short one. The first have a cadence that is softer and seems to fall; the second have more energy and spring.

The feet are grouped into cola, or members; the members into verses; the verses into periods and strophes; and these into larger

groups, of which the most important is the triad (strophe, antistrophe, and epode). A verse proper is made up of two members, as in the case of the epic hexameter or the iambic senarius. This is the oldest and simplest construction. Lyric poetry constantly tended to expand its groups and diversify its combinations. The oldest lyric strophes have a small number of members or verses, each very simple; but the odes of Pindar or Bacchylides have several triads, each of long and complicated strophes. Yet, in general, feet of different types were not combined together—the dactyl with the iamb, for example, or the iamb with the pæon. At all events, if such combinations were made, this was done to produce an unusual and rare effect; and as a rule we may suppose that, even where the metre seems to be composed of heterogeneous elements, the diversity was reduced to uniformity by some means of execution that we no longer understand.

One more trait to be noted is that the poet, or the author of the words, is at the same time the author of the music. The Greek lyric writers were both poets and composers. Very often, too, they rendered the music themselves, chanting to the music of the cithara. When their poems were to be accompanied by the flute, since it is impossible at the same time to sing and to play that instrument, they reserved for themselves the singing, leaving the instrument to a specialist; yet it was they who composed the air. From every point of view, therefore, it is the chant, the poetry, that is predominant; the music is only a support for the words. First of all, the poets were great artists, and put into the words all the beauty and expressive force possible. Hence Greek lyric poems are literary works of the first order; and some of them, those of Stesichorus and Pindar, for example, were esteemed by the critics of antiquity as almost equal to the masterpieces of Homer.

**3. First Type of Dignified Lyric: the Nome. Olympus and Terpander.** — During the period of about three centuries, while this rich product of poetry and music was being formed, there appeared in succession a great variety of lyric types. The earliest of these is that called the “nome” (*νόμος*).

The meaning of the word is somewhat obscure, or at least vague. It seems to signify properly an “air”; but that does not mean anything definitive. Historically it designates a type of composition, but the principal characteristics of the type it is impossible to determine.

The nome was a liturgical chant executed in honor of a god by a single singer, who played his own accompaniment on the cithara. He probably began with an invocation; then he related a mythic



narrative borrowed from the legend of the god, and ended with a prayer. Antiquity attributed to the Lesbian Terpander the honor of having brought the *citharedic* nome to perfection. He was said to have increased the number of its parts from three to seven. We have seen that he was also thought to have improved the cithara by increasing the number of the strings. However obscure or uncertain these traditions, it is easily seen that his work, in the opinion of the ancients, consisted in being the first to make the old traditional nome a permanent work of art, and that his rôle was at once musical and literary. He is said to have lived at the end of the eighth century and the beginning of the seventh. It was the period of greatest progress in Greek music. The nome, executed by a single singer, a professional virtuoso, evidently found itself, prior to the more popular airs, in a condition to profit by the new inventions. Lesbos, moreover, the island to which the head of Orpheus was said to have been carried by the waves after his death, was well fitted geographically to combine the old musical traditions of Greece proper with the usages of Asia Minor. In this way the great part attributed by antiquity to the Lesbian Terpander in the final constitution of the laws of lyric poetry is easily explained. But of his rôle and work only vague and confused accounts were left behind; and it is impossible to determine to-day his precise worth as a poet. A few verses preserved under his name, which are composed wholly of long syllables, give the impression of grave religious poetry, but we cannot deduce from them his literary personality, and even the genuineness of the verses in doubt.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the *citharedic* nome, there was a Greek tradition about another nome accompanied by the flute, whose creation was attributed to a Phrygian named Olympus. The Phrygian origin of Olympus shows that from Phrygia, the land of the satyr Marsyas, Greece derived some form of music not indigenous, designed to be accompanied by the flute. The personality of Olympus is unknown. Perhaps the name was a mere label by which men later designated a considerable group of old Asiatic airs executed by performers on the flute. Plato speaks, in his time, of these old airs and their singular charm, as a man who had heard them himself. It is not easy to decide to what date to assign the hypothetical Olympus. Sometimes two personages of the same name are distinguished, one of whom lived earlier than Terpander, and the other later. All this signifies that in the music which goes by his name, there were popular melodies whose origin was very ancient; and nomes considerably

<sup>1</sup> Fragments of Terpander in Bergk, *Poetæ Lyrici Græci*, III, 7; and Hiller, *Anthologia Lyrica*, Teubner, p. 163.

more recent in date, composed for the flute in imitation of Terpan-der's nomes for the cithara. Olympus and his school would have no claim to a place in the history of literature, if a curious bit of information did not tell us that the nomes said to be composed for the flute were in elegiac verse; hence we are led to suppose that the invention of this metre, which was to enjoy so brilliant a career, goes back to the old school of Græco-Phrygian flute-players, personified under the name of Olympus.

**4. Semi-lyric Forms: the Elegy and the Iamb.**—After the nome, the lyric forms which first came to literary perfection were the elegy and the iamb, two forms really but half lyric, as their metrical structure is almost as simple and regular as that of epic, and so is very easily dissociated from musical accompaniment. Their accompaniment, besides, is reputed to have been quite simple—a few notes calculated to sustain the voice of a declaimer, rather than an air in the strict sense of the term. And this seems the more probable, because of the liberty of metrical structure in the iambic and elegiac verses, where the iamb and the spondee, or the dactyl and the spondee, constantly replace each other in corresponding situations of successive verses.

The word *ἔλεγος*, probably Asiatic in its origin, appears to have meant at first a flute of reed-cane. It was then applied to a sort of threnody, or funeral lamentation, accompanied by the playing of the flute. The elegiac metre (*ἐλεγεῖον*, *sc.* *μέτρον*) is a distich formed of two hexameters of which the second—very improperly called pentameter—includes two “silences,” one at the middle and one at the end. A succession of distichs forms an elegy. Each distich is a short strophe of very simple design, whose monotonous brevity is well suited to the expression of reflective thought, and particularly of sadness. We have already seen that the nome for the flute employed it. As early as the seventh century we find this rhythm used to express all sorts of personal meditations and thoughts of a specially energetic character, since it is equally removed from the dignity of epic and the lively or disdainful familiarity of the iamb. The elegy was executed particularly at festivals. It may be a serious conversation, or a bit of counsel or of confidence about one's emotions: but always it is impersonal. Owing to the precision of its metre, it excels in expressing moral maxims. It was early dissociated from music; mere elegance of verse supplied its needs; it was recited and read, but not sung.

The iamb, as a literary type, is almost contemporary with the elegy. In origin, it is probably connected with the cult of Demeter. The Homeric hymn to that goddess relates that, in search of her

daughter, she came to Eleusis, and there abandoned herself to grief, when a servant by the name of Iambe caused her to laugh at some pleasantries. And so later Iambe came to have the honor of a place in the liturgy of the mysteries. The etymology of the word *ἱαμβος* — whence the attempt has been made to derive the name Iambe — is not known. All one can say is that it must have served to designate, in very early times, a popular satire, analogous to that which the legend attributed to Iambe. The idea of satire and raillery came to be indissoluble from the name of the iamb. In the musical sense, the phrase "iambic movement" is applied to all poetry chanted to a rhythm of triple time. This is not the sense in which we take it here: the iamb proper is a foot having three short *moræ* and beginning with a short syllable. The most common iambic verse is composed of three iambic dimeters. When the iambic verse is actually chanted, metres of different lengths are sometimes united in a strophe. Sometimes, by an amusing contrast, even the trochee brusquely displaces the iamb and breaks the unity of the rhythm. At other times, the iambic verse was not really chanted, but accompanied by the playing of an instrument (the *κλεψῖαμβος*, the nature of which is not known) that did not follow the language, syllable for syllable, as in the ordinary chant, but gave it a free accompaniment. One sees the tendency of the iamb to detach itself from melody. The separation was probably effected early, at least for the common form of iambic metre, the trimeter, whose popular character and easily intelligible rhythm had not much need of the help of music.

Although elegy and iamb were types of very different origin, they had traits in common that tended to reconcile them: both were adapted to chatty conversation, though with a slight difference of tone; both gave to the musical accompaniment a quite subordinate place and finally even dispensed with it. So we need not be surprised to see the two types often treated by the same poet with adroitness and success. For that reason we shall not study the two separately. We shall consider in a single chapter Archilochus, the master of the iamb, and Solon, the master of the elegy, each of whom excelled also in the form preferred by the other.

**5. The Strictly Lyric Forms.** — Besides the iamb and the elegy, there were produced and developed a number of other types which, however, had the common characteristic of giving to music a place more and more important.

These are, first, various forms of personal poetic expression that might be called generally songs, or light odes. Nor need we distinguish them according as they have for their subject love, wine, war, or something still different. The only distinction correspond-

ing to a difference of type is that connected with certain festal lays called "*scolia*." These will be treated in a later chapter (see chap. VIII, 3).

Next come a number of forms of popular origin, adapted to express general emotions and chanted ordinarily by a chorus. They are the hymeneal, the threnody, and the pæan, mentioned, as we have seen, in the Homeric poems; then the *hyporchema*, illustrated in the hymn to the Delian Apollo, which is an ode accompanied by imitative dances; lastly the dithyramb, connected with the vintage festival and distinguished from all the preceding types by its tumultuous movement and by the tendency of its chorus to dance in a circle. That is to say, in the other types, the chorus advances as in a march, or dances in parallel files, its movements being designed for gravity or for grace; here the intoxicating influence of Dionysus overcomes the dancers.

There is a final category of lyric chants which are either the inventions of advanced art, or such complete transformations of ancient popular forms that their popular origin is quite concealed. For instance, the *prosodion*, or processional march, and the *parthenion*, which is a *prosodion* executed by young girls, were possibly in use before the period of the ornate lyric; yet we do not meet with authentic examples before the time when the art had reached its maturity; and these appear at once with a character of complete elegance. Moreover, one could in this way connect the heroic hymn, as written by Stesichorus, with the oldest hymns of the bards; but it is more plausible to consider the phenomenon as wholly new. The case is the same, for yet a better reason, with the laudatory hymn, or encomium, and the triumphal ode, or *epinicion*, which are the acknowledged products of a complex civilization and of a brilliant, refined, artistic taste.

The characteristics of each of these types will be more easily given when we come to note the first appearance of each in the history of lyric composition. For the present, let it suffice to say a final word about a feature common to them all which possibly will lead to a better understanding of their evolution: this is that the general progress of lyric poetry is toward an ideal of poetic and musical sumptuousness, of studied elegance, of nobility sometimes rather conventional, imposed unconsciously on all the types, which effaces many of the original differences between them. Hence, for example, in Pindar or Bacchylides, there are only shades of difference between the tone of a heroic hymn and that of a *scolion*, between a pæan and a *hyporchema* or a dithyramb. The popular origin of lyric poetry is thenceforth obscured; the original differences



are lost beneath the uniformly abundant flood of sonorous vowels and harmonious musical periods.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [The following classification may help the reader to a better understanding of Greek lyric poetry :—

The Lyric Poem.

1. The Popular Lyric.
  - a. The Nome.
  - b. The Light Ode, including the Scolion.
2. The Semi-Popular Lyric.
  - a. The Hymeneal.
  - b. The Threnody.
  - c. The Pæan.
  - d. The Hyporchema.
  - e. The Dithyramb.
3. The Ornate Lyric.
  - a. The Prosodion, including the Parthenion.
  - b. The Heroic Hymn.
  - c. The Encomium, including the Epinicion. — Tr.]

## CHAPTER VII

### ELEGIAC AND IAMBIC POETRY

1. Preliminary Observations.
2. Callinus.
3. Archilochus.
4. Simonides of Amorgos.
5. Tyrtæus.
6. Mimnermus.
7. Solon.
8. Theognis.
9. Phocylides.
10. The Epigram.
11. Hipponax.<sup>1</sup>

**1. Preliminary Observations.** — The masters of elegiac and iambic poetry are not known except through fragments. Some of these, it is true, are long enough to allow us to reconstruct the general trend of the thought and the character of the composition; yet we do not know for certain that we possess a single complete elegy or an iambic poem wholly intact. Hence our opinion of elegiac and iambic composition must always be given with reserve. Furthermore, we are in danger at times of receiving the wrong impression. Since the elegiac poems, in particular, abound in easily detachable moral reflections (*γνῶμαι*), the authors of these maxims are sometimes called “gnomic” poets; that is, writers of maxims. Were the expression taken literally, one would be tempted to see in these vivacious poets professional moralists or pedagogic versifiers like Dufaur de Pibrac, who wrote moral quatrains in the sixteenth century. But so far as most of them were concerned, nothing would be more inexact. The elegiac poets, like the masters of the iamb, are thoroughly individual; and their very moralizing ordinarily reveals the prepossessions of their life. Most of them have an original character, in which the impress of their race and time is combined, in a most interesting way, with traits peculiar to them alone. Happily the remains of their works, however much mutilated, still preserve the essentials of their intellectual and moral character; and it is not impossible to make this seem, to some extent, real again.

<sup>1</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** The fragments of the elegiac and iambic poets have been published by Bergk, *Poetæ Lyrici Græci*, II, Leipsic, 4th ed., 1878, and by Hiller, *Anthologia Lyrica*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1899. Cf. Buchholz, *Anthologie aus den Lyriken der Griechen*, I, Leipsic, 1886. There is a special edition of Theognis by Welcker, *Theognidis Megarensis Reliquiæ*, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1826, with prolegomena and notes. A French translation of the principal elegiac poets is in the *Poètes Moralistes de la Grèce*, Paris, Garnier. The text of Hipponax is edited by Welcker, Göttingen, 1817; Lachmann, *Choliambica Poesis Græcorum*, Berlin, 1845; and Rossignol, *Les Choliambographes grecs et latins*, Paris, 1849.

**2. Callinus.** — Perhaps the most ancient of the elegiac poets was Callinus of Ephesus, whom Strabo considers to be earlier than Archilochus. This would put him at the beginning of the seventh century.<sup>1</sup> Yet we know almost nothing about him, except that he saw Asia Minor threatened or invaded by the Cimmerians, and that, among other poems, he composed elegies in which he exhorted his fellow-citizens to awake from their torpor: —

“How long will ye lie sleeping? How soon, young men, will ye make your hearts valiant? In the presence of the stranger, ye live in delicacy, and are not ashamed; ye are confident of peace, though war menaces the entire country.”<sup>2</sup>

The elegy thus constituted seems at once like a harangue of Demosthenes. It is the harangue of a time when there was yet no prose. The remainder of the fragment is an eloquent, and no less energetic, call to courage: —

“Let every man hurl from his dying hand yet one last javelin. It is glorious and noble for a soldier to protect his country, his children, and the maiden whom he has espoused, from the hands of the enemy. Death comes only when Fate has finished spinning the thread of life; but until then, let each, sword in hand, march stout-hearted behind his shield, steadily on from the beginning of the battle,” etc.

Some scholars have asked whether these verses, though attributed to Callinus, were not really the work of Tyrtaeus, whose manner they fully recall. But the question is a merely hypothetical one. It is more plausible to think that Tyrtaeus was inspired by Callinus. And so the fact would be explained, that the elegy of military life, first written at Ephesus on Ionic soil, kept even in Sparta the forms of the Ionic dialect.

**3. Archilochus.** — Almost contemporary with Callinus. Archilochus composed some elegies. But his high fame came chiefly from his iambic poems. He is the earliest, and at the same time the most illustrious, writer of iambic verse. To him is ascribed the honor of having invented the iamb; but this means merely that he was the first to compose great literary works in iambic metre. Some placed him side by side with Homer.

Quintilian said of him:<sup>3</sup> “His style has admirable vigor; his sentences are robust, terse, penetrating; he is vivid and spirited. In genius, perhaps he had no superior; or if he had, it is due to the subjects he treated.” Few of the losses sustained in the great shipwreck of antiquity are more to be regretted than that of the poems

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, XIV, p. 647.

<sup>2</sup> Stobæus, *Floril.* LI, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Quintilian, X, 1, 59.

of Archilochus. We have only short fragments of his poems; yet his originality was so marked as still to be manifest in his extant verses, which are pure jewels.

He was born at Paros in the first half of the seventh century. The leading events of his life were mentioned in his iambs, whence they could be gleaned by the scholars of antiquity.<sup>1</sup> It was troubled, stormy, and probably somewhat brief. After losing his fortune, he repaired to Thasos to regain it, and there made numerous enemies. He boasts in some celebrated verses that, as a mercenary soldier, he threw away his shield while fighting against Thracian barbarians. The best-known episode of his life is his love for Neobule, the daughter of Lycambes; refused by her father, the rejected lover avenged himself in iambic verses that brought both Lycambes and his daughter to despair. Legend adds that they committed suicide by hanging themselves. He was killed in a war between the Parians and the Naxians.

In the midst of this variety of adventures, he wrote poems in profusion, composing iambs, elegies, and even hymns. He is thought to have attempted every existing form of poetry and not to have been mediocre in any. He had an eminently rich nature, endowed with the most diverse faculties. Ready in vengeance, often cruel in raillery, yet he was capable of sympathy with the misfortunes of his fellow-men; he was capable of love, enthusiasm, melancholy, and even argument. Now he was vexed with his miseries, and now laughed at them. A rich store of gayety was his, almost of playfulness, that constantly pleases the reader. In all that he wrote, despite the diversity of circumstances and moods, there is an adroit grace, an ease, and a lightness, that are his characteristic and peculiar charm.

Of his hymns we know very little. Yet we see, from one of his fragments, that he wrote a hymn to Demeter, and that it was in iambic verse. This tends to confirm the hypothesis, stated above, respecting the origin of that verse (p. 89). There is another fragment of two lines from a hymn to Heracles, that is also iambic. The hymn continued to be famous and was often sung at Olympia two centuries later in honor of victors who had not time to wait for the composition of a new ode.<sup>2</sup> It was sung without accompaniment; an imitative refrain, *τήνελλα*, took the place of the cithara. His bold, ingenious fancy had probably borrowed this refrain from some popular air; and, in so doing, had assured its continuance in favor.

His elegies, chanted probably at banquets, were addressed to

<sup>1</sup> See especially Ælian, *Varia Historia*, X, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Pindar, *Ol.* X, 1, and the scholiast.



special friends whom he named. In them he mentions his fortunes, gloomy or bright, seriously or lightly, but always with exquisite grace. His verse and language have a charming nimbleness, and many quick and unexpected surprises. For the death of a brother-in-law he has accents of touching gravity. On the duty of a soldier he speaks like Callinus and Tyrtæus, though with more elegance. But he is thoroughly original when he sings of the life of a mercenary: —

“At the lance’s point, good cakes well-kneaded; at the lance’s point, the wine of Ismaros; I drink it, leaning upon my lance.”

Or when jesting about his great misfortune, the loss of his shield: —

“Some Samian, now, puts on my shield, my pretty shield, that I threw away, alas! near a thicket. But I escaped the dread hour of death. Farewell, dear shield — ’tis easy to buy a new one that will be dearer still.”

I should be willing to believe, from these verses, that Archilochus was brave, notwithstanding the legend. A coward, instead of writing this pleasantry in honor of his flight, would have concealed it. Patriotism, too, was in no way concerned in the matter, as the event occurred in Thrace, among mercenaries and barbarians.

His great claim to glory rests upon his iambs, composed at first in iambic trimeters or trochaic tetrameters, which, in the epodes, are associated with other metres. Probably most of these poems, like his elegies, were first chanted at banquets. He mentions everything and everybody with a liberty of speech, sprightliness, and force of expression that are remarkable. Satiric writers are likely to seem long and monotonous. Archilochus is always natural, and he expresses every kind of sentiment; if he descends at times to shameless coarseness, he rises at others to the loftiest morality. He is vehement, graceful, and ironic by turns; his thrusts may be fatal or wholly superficial; he is both terrible and charming, yet always with a variety of sentiment, an abundance of images, a vivacity of language, that remind one of Aristophanes.

He speaks of Neobule with picturesque grace: —

“She loved to adorn herself with a branch of myrtle or a pretty rose; and her hair threw a shadow on her shoulders and her neck.”

In a few words he expresses the whole force of his passion: —

“Miserable, consumed with desires, I have no life in me; the cruelty of the gods pierces me with awful pangs, even to the marrow of my bones.”

After having made Lycambes an object of derision, he pursues him with cruel sarcasm : —

“Thou venerable Lycambes, what has been thy thought? How has thy mind been distorted? Surely thou hadst the force of reason; now, before all the city, hast thou made thyself a laughing-stock.”

And elsewhere, how many vivid, picturesque descriptions! Speaking of rugged and mountainous Thasos, where he had found naught but deception, he says : —

“It is as scrawny as the back of an ass, for shaggy forests are its crown.”

Then here is a very different passage, with a judicious, yet energetic, moral inspiration, in spite of the passionate apostrophe of the beginning : —

“Arise, my soul, pitiable toy of countless ills, resist the wicked to their face, and with the snare of the enemy surrounding thee, be firm. Hast thou won, glory not in thy triumph; hast thou lost, yield not to sighs of despair. Let thy joy in prosperity and thy anger in adversity be moderate. Reflect upon the constant changefulness of human fate.”

Elsewhere he shows himself capable of piety: “Leave to the gods,” says he, “thy cares.” He is even capable of generosity; for though writing, “Mine is a great art: when another wounds me. I give him cruel wounds,” — though attacking the living savagely, yet he wished to have mercy shown the dead, “It is not well to hurl an insult at him who is no more.” This last trait rounds off interestingly the image of the rich and brilliant writer.

✓ 4. **Simonides of Amorgos.** — Simonides, born at Samos, but later a citizen of Amorgos, may have been a contemporary of Archilochus, and even older than he, if, as Suidas has said, he was the leader of the Samian emigration that colonized Amorgos, and if this event is to be put in 693, as has been thought. But the whole chronology is doubtful. His poetry is certainly later than that of Archilochus, from which it is derived; and may be as much as a century later. It is, besides, of only secondary merit. If he wrote elegies, as we are told, we know nothing about them. What distinguishes him to-day is, above all, two rather important iambic poems; one of twenty-four verses on the miseries of mankind, the other of a hundred and eighteen verses on women.

The first of these, a sort of epistle addressed to an anonymous friend, though but slightly original, does not lack elegance. Of greater interest is its philosophic, generalizing nature, so different

from the aggressive vivacity of Archilochus. It evidently marks a new advance in the evolution of iambic poetry.

The celebrated poem on women, though of satiric character, yet has this in common with the preceding, that it contains no personal attacks. The thought is general. He amuses himself by taking ten types of women and showing how their lineage goes back to various animals: one sprang from the pig, another from the dog, another from the monkey, another from the bee. We see here the fundamental idea of the Æsopic fable. The poem certainly was successful, else it would never have been transmitted to us. The novelty of satire explains the success it had in antiquity. It cannot charm the modern reader so much. Such poetry, being morose in style, often lacks delicacy and nice humor: the jest is too long continued and becomes dull. The style is not without elegance, though somewhat dry and prosaic.<sup>1</sup>

**5. Tyrtaeus.** — With Tyrtaeus, at least in the greater part of his productions, we return to the military elegy of Callinus.

His life is obscured by legend and so not well known. It is said that the Lacedæmonians, during the second Messenian War, had asked from the oracle at Delphi the means of bettering the ill-fortune that attended their enterprises. On the advice of the oracle, they asked the Athenians to furnish them a chief. These sent them, in derision, a lame schoolmaster, named Tyrtaeus. But to the great surprise of the Athenians, he was able, with his elegies, to raise the courage of Sparta and secure her the victory. It is not difficult to recognize in parts of the elegies a facetiousness analogous to that by which Aristophanes explains the origin of the Peloponnesian War. It seems probable, judging from the usages of Sparta at this time, and from certain apparent allusions in the verses themselves, that an oracle had really been given the Spartans to seek abroad for some poet who should end their discord, after the manner in which, it is said, Terpander and Thaletas had done; and that the Athenian Tyrtaeus, now a Spartan by adoption, performed in his new country the part, first of a peacemaker, then of an inspirer of warlike courage. The date of these events, given approximately by the second Messenian War, is generally placed between 645 and 628.

The poems were of two sorts: on the one hand, military chants called *ἐμβατήρια*: and on the other, elegies.

The *ἐμβατήρια* were not marches, but "airs of attack against the enemy." The Lacedæmonians marched into battle to the sound of the flute. The rhythm of these *ἐμβατήρια* was anapestic, with an

<sup>1</sup> Lucian (*Pseudol.* 2) says that Simonides also composed personal satires, but we know nothing about them.

energetic, lively movement. They were written in Doric, not in Ionic, like the elegies. This Doric was, too, as in most works of a literary nature, an artificial, composite dialect, somewhat different from the spoken language. A fragment of six verses, the longest we have, is a sort of *Marseillaise*, whose patriotism is all aglow with the pride of race, political caste, and military ancestry : —

“ Rise, children of Sparta, the land rich in heroes ; put the shield on your left shoulder, citizen youths ; hurl boldly the javelin, and spare not your life ; for such is not the way of the Spartans.”

The elegies comprise first a poem called *Eunomia*, then a series of poems united under the term *Exhortations* (Ἐπὸθῆκαι).

The *Eunomia*, as its name indicates, was a eulogy of law and good order, which at that time, owing to the evils of war, were at a very low ebb in Sparta. We still have about thirty verses that enable us to determine some of its essential features. The first is the noble inspiration of the poet, who, to reconcile the Spartans, called them away from their discussions and forced them to unite in veneration of their past: Zeus and Apollo are the founders of their city ; wise and valiant kings have preserved it ; the work of the gods and of their ancestors must needs be respected. Another noticeable feature is the Homeric air of the language, so particularly adapted for bringing to mind the glories of the past.

The *Exhortations* are better known to us owing to Stobæus and the orator Lysurgus, who have preserved three extracts of thirty or forty verses each. These contain few or no myths ; there is no return to the past, nothing but a vehement summons to courage, and striking pictures of the lot in store for the hero or the coward. The contrast between bravery and cowardice constitutes the essential motive of these extracts, and determines their composition. All this is very simple art. The style, too, is of an open and frank simplicity. Although there are many Homeric turns, there are but few figures of speech, few efforts to vary the style or give it brilliance. The same phrases are repeated naïvely or even carelessly : three verses on one page end with ἐν προμάχοισι πεσὼν or ἐν προμάχοισι πεσόντα. The beauty of these extracts is in their moral and patriotic tone rather than in any artistic quality. One feels that the writer is a heroic spirit, devoted to the city, a citizen soldier whose heart is burning with wrath. The very soul of Sparta breathes in the verses. The poet's imagination can see and point out, in the living, familiar attitudes of reality, the hero and the coward — the good hoplite, “ easily seated on his heels, riveted to the earth, biting his lips ” ; and the miserable captive, despoiled, dishonored, vagabond,



and mendicant. Sparta may well have continued to chant these noble verses; Athens herself, in the days of Socrates and Xenophon, was wont to make her youths learn them by heart; and they were recited by the orator Lycurgus when he wished to express the purest possible sentiment of valor.

**6. Mimnermus.** — Elegy is capable of expressing all the sentiments and moods of life. After Tyrtaeus came Mimnermus; after the rude patriotism of Sparta, the voluptuous and melancholy world-weariness of Ionia.

Mimnermus was a native of Colophon. He lived in the second half of the sixth century. His fame as a flute-player seems to have been almost equal to his fame as a poet.

The subjects treated in his elegies were of various sorts. Pausanias mentions a poem of his written in behalf of Smyrna in her war against Gyges, king of Lydia. A fragment still preserved describes a Lydian military chief. Elsewhere the origins of Smyrna and of Colophon are treated. But the subject which he preferred above all and to which he was ever returning was that of his own sentiments, the expression of his own love or melancholy. He was original in giving to the world its first elegiac love-poems. A female flute-player, Nanno, to whom he had been devoted, probably found a place in a number of his verses; for it seems that the collection of his poems was early designated by her name. We do not know how his love was expressed. What we see in the fragments is not so much the image of a personal passion as a eulogy of love in general, and of youth and pleasure: —

“What life, what happiness can there be without luxurious Aphrodite? Might I perish rather than lose my wish for these sweet experiences, secret emotions, charming presences, gay flowers of the time of youth. . . . When mournful old age comes to make ugliness and beauty one, man’s heart is torn with cruel vexation; the rays of the sun no more light up his face; his children hate him; women despise him; thus have the gods made old age miserable.”

The joy of being young, the horror of growing old, this is the double idea that inspired his most penetrating cadences. “Better to die than live,” he is ceaselessly repeating. On the whole, his verses are gloomy. Fear of the future is as great an element in his thinking as joy over present prosperity. The sentiment of human frailty fills him with deep melancholy: —

“Like the leaves brought forth in the flowery season of spring, under the warming rays of the sun, we enjoy for one brief instant the buoyancy of youth, condemned by the gods to know neither

what is good for us nor what is ill; but the shadows of fate hover round us, bringing either the feebleness of age, or death. The enjoyment of youth is but for a day; it lasts only while the sun is shining. When the term of youth is past, life is less to be desired than shunned."

Poet of pleasure, yet profoundly intelligent, he pierced to the depths of physical enjoyment, and found it hollow. It was his merit to have been the first to state this discovery in verses of mournful elegance, which Greece never could forget.

**7. Solon.**—Solon is the oldest of the Attic poets proper; for though Tyrtaeus was an Athenian by birth, his poetry was Spartan. With Solon, the real spirit of Athens appears in literature, and its essential traits are seen at once: equilibrium of the whole being, in which body and soul live harmoniously together; in which brilliant imagination, clever finesse, and sound reason are united with strong will; in which the grace of Ionia and the vigor of Sparta are combined with a justice natural, easy, well-pondered, which thinks well and speaks well, without effort or weakness. The life of Solon and his poetry are closely linked; the latter is always a reflection of the former, and both are the product of the same intelligence. So, without studying in detail his career as a statesman, we must note its general character, that we may better understand his work as a poet.

Solon, son of Exceestides, was born about 640. He came from one of the most illustrious families of Athens, that of the Codrids. Though of noble birth, he was at first poor, since his father was ruined. To regain his fortune, he engaged in commerce. He travelled, and, growing rich, returned to Athens with a wide experience of men and affairs, having given proof of a mind free from prejudice and of a bold and prudent activity. When he returned, about 610, Athens was in a lamentable condition: at home, violent discords, a weak and tyrannical aristocracy, a people crushed with debts, a country emptied by emigration, the religious and moral uneasiness due to consciousness of wrongs—sometimes sacrilegious, such as the murder of Cylon—to which civil strife had brought the political factions; and abroad, an administration so weak that the island of Salamis, in sight of the Piræus, had fallen a prey to the Megarians, and Athens seemed to be in despair of ever regaining it. Solon undertook to remedy the city's ills. He inspired patriotism and confidence by his verses, and reconquered Salamis; then he brought the Cretan Epimenides, a sort of prophet, a real physician for men's spirits, to reëstablish by purification a religious peace. There remained the quarrel between rich and poor. Honored by all,—“by the rich because he was rich, and by the others because

he was honest" (Plutarch),—Solon seemed fitted by his merit to serve as arbiter between the two parties. In 594 he was elected archon, with full power to regulate the question of debts. With bold equity, he succeeded in the difficult task, despite the surprise and discontent of the more stubborn elements of both parties. After a short period of resistance, the justice of his course was everywhere acknowledged, and new powers were delegated to him for applying to the reconstruction of the laws the great ability he had shown. He gave Athens a political constitution and remodelled her laws for private affairs. His whole work was stamped with marks of lucid reason and intelligent persuasiveness. After the promulgation of these laws, it is said that he left his country the second time and made distant voyages, probably to Asia and Egypt. Legend brought him into relation with Cræsus. He returned to Athens and lived there until the tyranny of Pisistratus had begun. Against this tyranny he had struggled in vain to put his fellow-citizens on their guard.

His poetry was to be a faithful echo of his life—a poetic commentary, so to speak, on his career. We have now of his only about two hundred and fifty verses; but even in these fragments, some of which, happily, are of moderate length, one can follow the principal phases of his activity and discern the noble purposes of his mind. All the verses, except four that come from a hymn, are elegiac or iambic. The iambs are, possibly, a trifle livelier, more personal, more familiar; while the elegiac verses are more impersonal in character. But the difference is slight. In both, we see above all a spirit, religious, human, highly moral, serious without pedantry, grave and gentle, with an amiable and perfectly natural magnanimity: then, too, one feels the talent of a great poet, an imagination bold and vivid, and a flexible, elegant style, expressing whatever it will with grace and moderation.

The poem on Salamis was doubtless one of the oldest. Plutarch praises its finished elegance. It had a hundred verses, of which only eight have come down to us. Yet, from the account of Plutarch, we can still reconstruct the scene. Solon came into the marketplace as a traveller, wearing a felt hat. The crowd gathered. He then took his place on the rock where ordinarily the herald stood, and said:—

"A herald come from lovely Salamis am I; as for my message, give ear to my verses and chants."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, perhaps better, "Verses and songs are the wares I bring" (Κόσμον ἐπέων ψιδήν τ' ἀντ' ἀγορῆς θέμενος). The herald referred to seems to have been the crier who sold merchandise in the ἀγορά.

Slowly his ingenious raillery gave place to eloquence. After a picture, possibly, of the guilty indifference of Athens and her coming disgrace, he cried out : —

“Oh, that I, then, changing my fatherland, might be a citizen of Pholegandros or Sicinos! For this rumor will pass from mouth to mouth : the man is an Athenian, one of these deserters of Salamis.”

And the elegy closed with the warlike cry : —

“Advance ! On to Salamis ! Let us fight for the charming isle, and put disgrace far from us.”

Certain verses, indeed, recall Tyrtæus ; but in the work as a whole there was an active nimbleness and a variety of tone that were truly Attic.

Several of his elegies were on the miseries that had preceded his reforms. These were the *Exhortations* (Ἐποθῆκαι), to use the title by which Suidas mentions them. A long extract (forty verses, possibly a complete elegy) has been preserved by Demosthenes (F.L. 286 ff.), who found in it an admirable picture of the evils caused by bad men in the state. The beginning presents a very pleasing picture : —

“Our country need not fear the will of Zeus nor the thoughts of the happy immortals. The great-hearted goddess watches over it : Pallas Athene, daughter of an almighty father, stretches her arm out over the city.”

The evils of Athens are due, not to the gods, but to men. The leaders of the people, the nobles, are possessed by an insatiable love of riches, and do not shrink from injustice to acquire wealth. The poet speaks with hardy frankness ; but in his language there is no violence or bitterness that one could attribute to personal motives.

It is in the name of truth, right, public safety, and divine justice that he speaks. He is a sage, a man of piety, and a patriot, not a mere partisan. The close is of great beauty : —

“Such is the instruction that my heart bids me bring to the Athenians. Disdain of law has filled the state with evils. Where law reigns, it produces order and harmony, and restrains the wicked. It smooths the rough places, stifles pride, quenches violence, and nips misfortune in the bud. It straightens crooked ways, subdues haughtiness, and represses sedition. It tames the fury of baleful discord ; and so men’s affairs are brought into harmony and reason.”

An admirable iambic passage, mentioned with praise by Aristotle, in his *Constitution of Athens*, is on Solon’s laws for debt. The mortgages that once caused thralldom of the soil had disappeared. The old owners had returned to their estates. This led to great joy and



also to great anger. Solon, with sublime inspiration, calls Earth herself, the august goddess, to witness: —

“There will render me testimony before the throne of justice the great mother of the two Olympic gods, the dark Earth, a slave at one time, but now free. From her I took away the bounding lines that had been put upon her in the days of yore. I have brought back to Athens, their fatherland, founded by the gods, many Athenians who had been sold, legally or illegally. Some were reduced by necessity to speak the language of oracles,<sup>1</sup> no longer knowing Attic, men who had wandered long over the earth. Others, subject at home to shameful servitude, trembling before their masters, I have set at liberty. This have I accomplished with strong hand, using both force and justice, and have fulfilled my promises. I have framed laws securing justice for the miserable and for the humble, dispensing to all a just equity. Another man, wicked and covetous, had he taken the spur in his hand, would not have held in check the people. Had I consented to do what mine adversaries were demanding . . . (*here follows a mutilated verse*), the city would have been deprived of many citizens. But my head have I tossed to every side, like a wolf in a pack of hounds.”

His elegies are moral poems *par excellence*, and known not only from rather numerous fragments, but also from an extract of seventy-six verses, which was probably a complete elegy. It has been preserved by Stobæus. The poet begins with an invocation to the Muses, imploring them for prosperity, glory, and riches, accompanied withal by justice. Else fatal calamity (*ἄτη*, the misery sent by the gods) delays not its approach: —

“It commences little, like the fire: at first nothing, it becomes at last an enormous evil. Works of violence have no lasting existence. Zeus sees the issue of all that is. As the breeze of spring quickly scatters the clouds: and, having tossed the waves of the unfruitful ocean and swept over the rich plains of the fertile earth, mounts suddenly to the lofty abode of the gods, to the bare sky, and brings to the sight of mortals the splendor of heaven: the mighty sun sheds on the rich earth its brilliant rays and not a cloud is to be seen; thus does the vengeance of Zeus break forth.”

Calamity does not have the weary impatience of ephemeral men. Failing to visit the guilty man himself, she comes upon his children: yet she comes surely (*ἤλθε πάντος αἵματος*). Here the poet draws an ample picture of the numerous occupations by which humanity seeks to attain riches. But do what he will, man is in the hands of the gods.

Other elegies, of which we have only some few verses, treat of pleasure in all its forms, and sometimes with a liberty of language

<sup>1</sup> In Aristotle. “Urged on by dire necessity.”

rather ancient than modern. The poet is no ascetic; he is a Greek of the sixth century, who puts pleasure among the gifts of the gods, and asks no more of human nature than that it follow its inclinations with temperance and reason. Even in his old age, according to Plutarch, he still wrote:—

“I love now the works of Aphrodite, Dionysus, and the Muses, as sources of delight for men.”

Elsewhere he addresses Mimnermus and gently chides the old master of elegy for having wished to die as young as sixty; he urges him to change his verse and say: “May the Fate of Death attend me when I am eighty years of age.” Solon must then have been an old man, amiable and smiling. It is doubtless the time when he wrote also: “I grow old learning daily some new fact.” It was always the same active, alert reason and the same studious philosophy, opposed to despair as well as to injustice, that clung faithfully to his old age.

The Greeks regarded him as one of the Seven Wise Men: an excellent master in morals and practical affairs, as they understood the term. No one could more justly represent than he their equilibrium of spirit, or their combination of successful action and speech with the serenity of a nature as richly endowed for political life as for the peaceful, elegant profession of poesy.

✓ 8. *Theognis*.<sup>1</sup>—But Greek elegy is full of contrasts, and so *Theognis* of Megara is quite different; for the poetry of Solon is harmonious and serene, while that of *Theognis* is biting and passionate. Both lived in the midst of civil discords; but though the one, in the benevolent loftiness of his thought, rose above it as a judge, the other engaged in it with all his might, inflicted and suffered wounds, and felt strong hatred. One loved to clothe himself with confident, optimistic piety; the other showed his vexation at the gods, or at least his great astonishment at not being better able to understand their justice.

*Theognis* is said to have lived in the middle and latter half of the sixth century.<sup>2</sup> Megara, his fatherland, was then a prey to the turbulent struggles between the aristocracy and the democracy. He was noble in birth. He had seen his party first dominant, then vanquished. Poverty and exile had fallen to his lot. Possibly at the end of his life he came back to Megara.

It was in the midst of these agitations that he composed his

<sup>1</sup> Text of *Theognis* by Sitzler, Heidelberg, 1880.

<sup>2</sup> This is based on Suidas (Θεόγνης) and St. Jerome (*Chron.*, Ol. 59, 1); but the passages are much questioned by modern scholars.

elegies. Many appear to have been addressed to friends whose names are found in the fragments still extant. And so we may suppose that the elegy early tended to become a kind of epistle. Most of Theognis's elegies were addressed to a young noble, Cynos, the son of Polypaos, possibly a relative of his. Owing to his personal experience and superior age, he felt himself called upon to give his young friend advice. He taught him about life almost as Hesiod had taught his own brother Perses in the *Works and Days*. Hence the didactic and gnostic character of his work and the abundance of moral maxims which constituted his peculiar personality. Therefore when the Athenians came to organize the curriculum of their youth, the adoption of the works of Theognis among the poems to be studied was quite natural. There remained only the task of separating the generalized maxim from the context, as this seemed, from a pedagogic point of view, either useless or vexatious. Such extracts were made later, and hence not only do we have more verses of his than of any other elegiac poet, but also they are more fragmentary. In all we have about fourteen hundred verses. It is easy to see too, that the scholastic and practical use of the collection, no less than its piecemeal state, induced, so to speak, the insertion of extraneous passages. Transitions and similes naturally slipped in, and his collection of poems gradually became an elegiac anthology. Some of these extraneous verses are easy to recognize even to-day; a few can be restored to their true authors; others can only be suspected. In short, if one cuts away from the whole about sixty undoubtedly apocryphal verses and admits that the great majority of the remainder are authentic, there is little chance of being mistaken. By prudently confining oneself to the passages whose authenticity is guaranteed by the name of Cynos, or by some very original turn of thought, one gets a fairly exact idea of his poetry.

The burden of his teaching to Cynos is just what tradition had given. He intends no innovation, and thinks himself an innovator in no way whatever.

"What I myself learned from honest people in my childhood that, Cynos, is the wisdom I teach thee."

In fact he preaches the old Greek morality: piety toward the gods, respect to parents, the moderation that flees from pride and restrains itself from violence. And herein there is nothing to distinguish him sharply from other Greek moralists.

Nevertheless, the originality of his nature and his true spirit are seen when, passing from abstract, traditional precept to the direct contemplation of the real world, he receives with mournful sensi-

bility the shock of contact with that world, and utters the cry of his exasperated passion.

Life is full of evils. At Megara, particularly, it is odious. The rabble is a cowardly troop, worthy of scorn and hatred:—

“Strike with your heel the wretched rabble, prick it with the point of the spur, hang a heavy yoke about its neck: for nowhere among all the men upon whom the sun looks down will you find a people so submissive to servitude.”<sup>1</sup>

The aristocracy, too, with its petty craving for money, increases the confusion of classes and the general disorder:—

“When we select a ram, an ass, or a horse, Cynos, we have regard to race and demand noble pedigree. But when it comes to marriage, a man of good descent espouses a slovenly creature, the daughter of a sloven, if only she bring him a rich fortune. . . . Riches destroy the purity of races; and then, Cynos, marvel not if the race of the Megarians decline; good and bad, all is pell-mell.”<sup>2</sup>

Money rules and corrupts all. Fortune being the principal thing, the poor man has no longer good birth, virtue, nor beauty; he is scorned. The poet is not easily exhausted on the subject of poverty; he speaks of an evil he has himself experienced. That for which he censures it is not so much the sum of the physical sufferings it brings, as the fact that it destroys a man's self-esteem and makes him a slave:—

“More than all else, Cynos, poverty crushes the honest man; more than hoary age, more than fever. In seeking to escape it, fear not, Cynos, to plunge into the deep sea, nor into the devouring whirlpool. Better die, if one be poor, than let one's life be eaten away by horrid misery.”<sup>3</sup>

Solon, in like misfortune, thought it wiser to recover himself by commerce. He had confidence, however, in the justice of Zeus. But Theognis is almost in doubt about the gods:—

“O Zeus, Friendly One, thou dost fill me with amazement. What! Thou art the king of the earth, rich in honor and power; thou knowest well the heart and purpose of every man; thy power, O King, is supreme. How, then, Son of Cronus, can thy thought consent to consider equal the evil and the good, those whose mind is inclined toward justice and those who, obedient to iniquity, devote themselves to violence?”<sup>4</sup>

In certain moments, he despairs and calls on death:—

“Happy, thrice happy he who descends in peace into the dark abode of Hades, never having trembled before his enemies, never

<sup>1</sup> vv. 846–849.

<sup>2</sup> vv. 183 ff.

<sup>3</sup> vv. 173 ff.

<sup>4</sup> vv. 373 ff.



having bowed before necessity,<sup>1</sup> never having put to test the affection of his friends."<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere he speaks of his thirst for vengeance:—

"He who has suffered great injustice waxes smaller; but when he has avenged himself, he grows anew."<sup>3</sup>

"Flatter thine enemy with words; and when he is in thine hand, strike him and search not for a pretext."<sup>4</sup>

"O that I might quaff their dark blood; and that some propitious deity would watch and aid me to accomplish this my wish."<sup>5</sup>

But he would not be a Greek if he were not capable of expressing also the sweet side of life, the pleasure of youth, the delight of the mind in banquets, with their song and conversation. Sometimes he shows tenderness<sup>6</sup> and spirit.<sup>7</sup> But even in the eulogy of pleasure, he calls up willingly the idea of death, with a force of expression sportive as well as eloquent:—

"I enjoy the sweet pleasantries of youth: for after that, beneath the earth, when I shall have given up my life, long shall I lie, quiet as a voiceless stone, far from the beautiful light of the sun; and then, though good, I shall no more see aught."<sup>8</sup>

In all these passages there is the striking originality of the thinker and the poet. This misanthropist, this pessimist, writes in a vigorous and pungent style. He scarcely has the brilliant imagination which is the toy of artistic fancy; yet he often shows the vivid imagination due to passion, such as that found, for example, in a vehement orator like Demosthenes. His thought readily adapts itself in maxims to the exact length of the distich; but as soon as the thought has ceased to be a maxim, it exceeds this measure, and, with the free movement characteristic of ancient elegy, goes on and on without scruple. He really knew that he was an artist. He wrote his own name in the prologue of his elegies that men might not be tempted to take from him the honor of their composition;<sup>9</sup> and in another poem he promised Cynos the glory which comes from beautiful, immortal verse.<sup>10</sup>

**9. Phocylides.**—The Milesian Phocylides, according to Suidas, was a contemporary of Theognis. We know nothing of his life; but the memory of his verses appears to have been well preserved in antiquity. He is no longer an author of elegies proper, but a gnomic writer in the strictest sense. He loves to incorporate moral observations and precepts in verses or detached distichs. These are

<sup>1</sup> The text of this verse is in dispute.

<sup>2</sup> vv. 1013-1016.

<sup>3</sup> vv. 361-363.

<sup>4</sup> vv. 364-365.

<sup>5</sup> vv. 349-350.

<sup>6</sup> vv. 166, 655-656.

<sup>7</sup> v. 303.

<sup>8</sup> vv. 567-570.

<sup>9</sup> vv. 19-23.

<sup>10</sup> vv. 237-252.

generally elegiac; but he used also pure hexameter. He had the rather singular practice of writing his name at the head of each of his maxims: almost all began thus, — καὶ τόδε Φωκυλίδεω. It is rather the method of a versifier than that of an inspired poet. His extant fragments contain nothing remarkable; they are concise, sensible, and judicious rather than deep or brilliant. The most celebrated of his sayings is the often imitated one: —

“This too sayeth Phocylides: the men of Leros are despicable. It is not simply one here and there that happens to be bad, but the whole people — except Procles; and Procles is a man of Leros.”

Here we see the elegiac distich assuming the form of epigram. To this, accordingly, we must now devote a word.

**10. The Epigram.** — Etymologically an epigram is an inscription. Two sorts of monuments particularly made the use of inscriptions popular in Greece: first the tombs, and then the offerings made to divinities in their temples. Without accepting as authentic certain ancient inscriptions in verse mentioned by Herodotus as contemporary with the heroic age,<sup>1</sup> it is certain that the use of metrical inscriptions began early. Archilochus composed some in elegiac verse. The use of the elegiac distich for epigram was a literary windfall; the distich is the form best suited to these little compositions. It incorporates and emphasizes the thought perfectly; it is a polished locket thoroughly appropriate to the expression of a short, elegant idea. In the time of which we are speaking the epigram was not yet satiric, except in a few cases: it was simple and natural, with something of firmness and breadth in the design, which gave it now and then the beauty of an Athenian or a Syracusan medal.

Many well-known poets wrote epigrams. The most famous one was Simonides of Ceos, some of whose epigrams are of great beauty. Under his name we have more than eighty, but they are not all authentic; his very excellence brought about the attribution to him of spurious compositions. Among his epigrams, many have only the merit of simplicity and exactness in giving proper names and expressing things difficult of incorporation in a distich. Others have real elegance. The most beautiful contain some great moral thought which the very brevity of the expression makes more striking. The Persian Wars, for example, mightily inspired him. He represents these two admirable verses as spoken by the heroes slain at Thermopylæ, to be inscribed on their monument:

“Stranger, at Sparta tell to passers-by,

That here, obedient to her laws, we lie.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, V. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Simonides, fr. 92.

There are other verses, apparently in honor of the dead heroes of Plataea: —

“To crown their country with inextinguishable glory, these men were clad in the sombre vestment of death; but even in death, they are not dead; for lo! their valor, glorifying them, lifts them to the skies from the dark abode of Hades.”<sup>1</sup>

The epigram reached its perfection with Simonides. During the two centuries that followed, it preserved the same character of breadth and simplicity with elegance, yet never became a literary type of the first order. One must reach the Alexandrian period to see it cultivated universally, and clothed with an elegance, if not more splendid, at least more studied and refined.

**11. Hipponax.** — There remains to be mentioned at the close of this period an iambic poet, the Ephesian Hipponax, who earned fame chiefly by the invention of the *choliambic* verse, or iambic *seazon* (σκάζων, halting). It is an iambic trimeter whose last iamb is replaced by a spondee. The use of this new metre evidently marked a new inspiration, a taste, however, really somewhat coarser. The author of the *Treatise on Oratory*, Demetrius, speaking of certain things pleasing in themselves (the roses, the nymphs, marriage rites), says that they would be so even in the mouth of Hipponax: that shows well enough how trivial and crude his inspiration was. Men said he was petty and counterfeit; and besides, he was poor. His bad humor was made the subject of explanations, though it had a certain gayety. We cannot now judge the matter for ourselves, as the fragments are rare and short. His historic importance comes particularly from the return of favor which, in the Alexandrian epoch, was given anew to the form of verse that he had invented and that we see illustrated, for example, in the mines of Herondas.

But from the eighth to the fifth centuries, whatever may have been the grandeur of Archilochus, Solon, or Theognis, neither the iamb nor the elegy had the first place in the poetic literature of Greece. That belongs to melic poetry, and above all to choral melic poetry, as this realized the artistic ideal of contemporary Greeks more fully.

<sup>1</sup> Simonides, fr. 94.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MELIC POETRY

1. The Poetry called Melic.
2. Lesbos and the Semi-popular Lyric.
3. The Scolia of Terpander.
4. Alcæus.
5. Sappho.
6. Anacreon.
7. The so-called Anacreontic Poems.
8. The Polite Lyric: General View.
9. Thaletas.
10. Alcman: the Parthenion.
11. Arion: the Dithyramb.
12. Stesichorus: the Heroic Hymn and the "Triad."
13. Ibycus: the Encomium.
14. The Great Masters of Choral Lyric Poetry: Simonides.
15. Pindar.
16. Bacchylides.
17. Lesser Poets.<sup>1</sup>

**1. The Poetry called Melic.** — The Greeks gave the name "melic" (μελικὰ ποιήματα, μέλη) not only to the poetry accompanied, like the iamb or the elegy, by notes on the flute or the *iambyce*, which were easily detached from it and destined soon to disappear completely: but also to that which was essentially musical, and served as a support for a regular chant, monodic or choral, often constructed to guide the dance of a chorus.

There was a considerable body of this lyric poetry; and during the three centuries from Terpander to Bacchylides it was the principal literary creation of Greece. It is far removed from us and sometimes difficult to understand, owing not only to the small amount still extant and its mutilation, but also to the nature of its artistic processes, its ideas, and its inspiration, which are widely different from our own. Its literary value is as great as its historical importance; and the effort to come to understand it is well worth the making.

We have already seen that numerous lyric types could be reduced to a few principal groups. Writers, indeed, generally distinguish the poetry sung by a single voice (song, light ode) from the poetry sung by a chorus (choral ode), the first form being that which flourished particularly at Lesbos and is found in Anacreon, the second marking the lyric of the Dorians. The distinction, with certain

<sup>1</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** General edition of the lyric poets: Bergk, *Poetæ Lyrici Græci*, Leipsic, 4th ed., 1878. General edition of the lyric poets except Pindar and the recently discovered poems of Bacchylides: Hiller, *Anthologia Lyrica*, Teubner, 1899. Extracts from the lyric poets: Smyth, *Greek Melic Poetry*, London, 1900. Particular editions of Pindar and Bacchylides will be mentioned later in connection with the sections devoted to the poets.

Consult the histories of Greek lyric poetry, especially Flach, Tübingen, 1884; and Nageotte, Paris, Garnier, 1888-1889.



necessary reservations, might be accepted; but the reservations are important, too, for the Lesbians also often used choral poetry; and certain Doric hymns may have been rendered by a single singer. The distinction between a monody and a choral ode, accordingly, is not fundamental. It would be more exact to distinguish between an elementary lyric (monodic or choral), belonging to the Lesbians and to Anacreon, which, by the simplicity of its language and musical structure was closely allied with popular inspiration; and the complex, ornate lyric, cultivated first at Sparta, then throughout the Doric world, and eventually in every part of Greece.

#### A. — THE SEMI-POPULAR LYRIC

2. **Lesbos and Lyric Poetry.** — Lesbos was the home of the simple, familiar lyric, as yet scarcely free from its popular origin. The island was, as it were, predestined to this by nature. We have seen that it received at an early age the musical traditions of Thrace. Its proximity to Asia brought it into relations with other musical forms no less rich. It was inhabited by a people naïvely sensuous, pleasure-loving, unpolitical, and little disciplined, among whom life seems to have preserved its rustic character, and thought never restrained imagination. Popular lyric composition is said to have flourished there in all periods. When Terpander, himself a Lesbian, had established the music for the cithara, native artists began to appear who applied his musical inventions to the different forms of lyric poetry and contributed a style unknown among the village bards. The festal ode, the love song, the threnody, the marriage hymn, and the hymn to the gods were cultivated by real artists, yet with the fondness for simplicity that suited a primitive people. Hence a very peculiar art arose, at once delicate and simple, without solemnity or great boldness or depth of inspiration, but teeming with rustic ingenuity and grace.

This simplicity is seen in the style and in the metrical form of the Lesbian odes. We shall speak of the style in connection with each poet; but we must note here the general character of the dialect. If the words are frequently poetic, the form given them is that of the dialect spoken in Lesbos. In this period the closer a Greek poet clung to popular inspiration, the more attached he was to a local dialect. And the Lesbian poets were no exception to the rule.

- As to metrical form, a Lesbian ode, regardless of its subject or author, is a succession of quite similar strophes, generally short and very simple in structure. Three or four members ( $\kappa\omega\lambda\alpha$ ), in which dactyls are mingled with trochees, form a strophe. The strophic

arrangements, unlike those of the great Doric poets, do not vary with each poem, but have only a small number of types and these almost fixed. The principal ones are those called the Alcaic strophe and the Sapphic strophe, from the names of the poets who were thought to have invented them—or who, more strictly, used them most.<sup>1</sup> Such strophes are well suited to monody. In the poems designed for the chorus, such as the hymeneals of Sappho, probably also in the pæans, there was, following popular tradition, a refrain after a short strophe. The rhythm of these chants seems to have been generally trochaic; the dactyl was doubtless reduced to the time of the trochee, though by a method which we do not fully understand. The ancients called the rhythm of the strophes of Alcæus and Sappho *logaædic*; but the precise sense of this word is doubtful, and perhaps we should not seek to define it too rigorously. We do not even know whether it rests on an exact understanding of the rhythm itself, or comes from the conjecture of later authorities on metre.

**3. The Scolia of Terpander.**—Terpander was said to have written some solia (σκόλια) or festal odes. The type of the scolion was kept throughout antiquity; and like other types of great longevity, it was much modified. In Pindar it became an ornate poem; at Athens it retained more of its popular character. The word σκόλιον is certainly the same as the adjective σκολιός, “oblique,” the difference of accent proving the Lesbian origin of the type. What constituted the “obliqueness” of this ode? Possibly the capricious order in which the guests took turns in rendering it, each one following his predecessor with a verse or couplet. At all events, if Terpander really wrote solia, he deserves to head the list of the Lesbian writers of light lyric odes or lays. But we know of nothing of the sort in his writings, and it is rather with Alcæus and Sappho that we must begin to-day the study of this lyric type.

<sup>1</sup> The following examples are taken from Horace, who imitated the poets of Lesbos:—

*Alcaic Strophe*

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum  
Soracte, nec jam sustineant onus  
Silvæ laborantes, geluque  
Flumina constiterint acuto.

*Sapphic Strophe*

Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum  
Semper urgendo, neque, dum procellas  
Cautus horrescis, nimium premendo  
Litus iniquum.

The difference between Horace and the Lesbian poets is that the latter, at the end of the verse, were freer in their use of the rules of prosody.

: 4. **Alcæus.** — This poet was born at Mitylene about 640, and belonged to an aristocratic family. The history of Mitylene at this time, like that of many Greek cities, was filled with civil discord. This ended in the establishment of despotism; Mitylene bowed to tyrants. When they had been driven out by Pittacus, the people gave their rescuer a dictatorship for ten years. Alcæus always took sides with the opposition, and part of his life was passed in exile. We conclude from one of his verses that he died at a ripe old age; **A** he demands that perfumes be sprinkled "on his head, tried in many misfortunes, and on his aged breast."<sup>1</sup> In these few words he gives a touching and true summary of his career.

In the midst of his adventures he found opportunity to become a great poet. His own life was his inspiration; his political animosities, his friendships, his pleasures, his sufferings, filled the larger part of his verse. He composed at least ten books, including political songs, chants of love, scolia, and a few hymns. Dionysius of Halicarnassus<sup>2</sup> and Quintilian<sup>3</sup> praise his great boldness and brevity, his combination of force with grace, the variety of his figures, and his clearness. His political songs in particular were worthy of a "golden plectrum," in the judgment of Quintilian; and Dionysius praised his oratorical vigor, because it reminded him of the rostrum. Of all this poetry, unfortunately, we have only fragments; and many of these are insignificant because of their brevity. Only a small number enable us to judge of him as an author.

In the fragments of political songs, we do, indeed, find the vigor noted by the ancient critics; but what strikes us particularly is the sometimes savage violence of the passions animating them. Lesbian ardor is present in its fulness. Neither Solon nor even Theognis sang of civil war in such a tone. The death of the tyrant Myrsilus drew from him this outcry of fierce joy: —

"Now should we revel in wine, now should we drink to intoxication, since Myrsilus is dead."<sup>4</sup>

The longest of the fragments is taken up with the description of a dwelling in which men are making ready for a combat. If, as seems certain, the combat is against the opposing political party, never was more childishly abominable enthusiasm inspired by the civil discords.

"The great hall shone with the gleam of bronze. All was in readiness for Ares. Here were brilliant helmets, above whose tops waved white plumes like horses' manes — an ornament for the

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 42, Bergk.

<sup>2</sup> *Critique on the Ancient Writers*. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Inst. Or.* X, 1, 63.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. 20.

warriors' heads. From hooks in the walls, all round the room, hung brilliant greaves of bronze—a rampart against stout arrows. New cuirasses of flax were there. Hollow shields covered the ground. Here were the swords of Chalcis, and here the kilts and girdles. These let us not forget, now that we have undertaken this enterprise."<sup>1</sup>

Another and a more poetic fragment is the one in which he compares civil strife with a tempest. The comparison itself is by no means rare, but the merit of Alcæus is in the blending of simple expression with picturesque strength:—

"I cannot understand the conflict of the winds. On this side and on that, the wave of water rushes on, and we, in the midst of all, tossed about in our dark ship, suffer grievously from the great storm. The foot of the mast is in bilge-water; the sail hangs all in shreds and the sail-ropes are untied."<sup>2</sup>

There is the same frank accent in the scolia. Politics is still sometimes the theme: one fragment is directed against Pittacus. But what seems to have had the principal place in these poems is the jollity of the tippler who loves wine and banquets as he hates Myrsilus, with all his heart and with no compunctions. In Alcæus, there is generally little to divine; his spirit, though at times gracious and even refined, is wholly unreserved. If he wishes a pretext for drinking, he is never at a loss. Athenæus, even, noticed this; whatever the season, whatever the circumstances, it is always for Alcæus the occasion of refilling his cup:—

"Let us drink; for the sun is in the zenith."<sup>3</sup>

"Zeus is passing into rain; the sky is letting winter loose; the streams of water are congealed. . . . Pour out the wine unsparingly—wine sweeter than honey."<sup>4</sup>

And so on in every season and on every occasion. In a clever passage he imitates a famous bit from Hesiod on the heat of noon-day,<sup>5</sup> and shows his power of originality in some personal touches, with an art both comprehensive and definite, and with exquisite grace.<sup>6</sup>

Love, too, occupied him much: "Though warlike of heart," says Horace,<sup>7</sup> "he loved, in the very midst of combat, or when he brought his wind-tossed bark to the shore, to sing of Bacchus and the Muses and Venus and her ever present son." Grave Quintilian regretted that Alcæus, being capable of higher themes, should so often have descended to sports and amours little worthy of his talent. Alcæus

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 18. Some of the details in the reading are disputed.

<sup>5</sup> Hesiod, *Works*, 582-587.

<sup>6</sup> Fr. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. 34.

<sup>7</sup> *Odes*, I. 32.



sang of beauty; and according to Greek usage, this was the beauty of young men as often as that of young women. His pictures were naïvely passionate, and a severe judge might censure them; but it does not appear that they were gross. In the few verses now extant, the dominating passion is love of charm and grace. Two verses at the beginning of a poem which he addressed to his rival Sappho are admirable for their combination of ardor and reserve. The ode as a whole, though to-day lost, must have been exquisite:—

“Pure Sappho, you with hair that breathes of violets, lady sweetly smiling, something I have to say to you; but modesty restrains me.”<sup>1</sup>

And Sappho replied, with a finesse truly feminine:—

“If you had a wish for the beautiful and the good, if your tongue meant to put forth no base word, then would shame not cover your cheeks, and you would simply speak your thought.”<sup>2</sup>

Of the hymns of Alcæus we possess very little. But we can see that the metres closely resembled those of the odes. We know, too, that in one of these poems, the *Hymn to Apollo*, Alcæus related at length some Delphic legends: he spoke of the departure of Apollo for the country of the Hyperboreans; then of his return, when all nature celebrated his festivities: the birds sang “as they can sing in Alcæus”—to quote Himerius;<sup>3</sup> first the nightingales and then the swallows; with the birds, the crickets; and even the fountain of Castalia, with its silver waves, joined in the delight of nature.

Exquisite grace and passion—these constitute Alcæus.

5. **Sappho.**<sup>4</sup>—One could say almost as much of Sappho; yet if the passion of Alcæus is usually one of politics, that of Sappho is wholly one of love: and her grace is perhaps still finer and more subtle than that of her great rival.

Of the life of Sappho very little is known. She was contemporary with Alcæus, living at the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the sixth. Born probably at Eresos, she spent most of her life at Mitylene. She suffered exile, for her noble birth evidently, about the same time as Alcæus, and betook herself to Sicily.<sup>5</sup> Her two brothers were mentioned by name in her verses; one of them, Charaxus, having conceived a passion for the courtesan Rhodopis, Sappho attacked, in a spirited ode, both the courtesan and her wayward brother.<sup>6</sup> Various stories tell us that she married and

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Sappho, fr. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Or.* XVI. 10.

<sup>4</sup> There is a text of the fragments of Sappho, published with translation, by Wharton, London, 1887.

<sup>5</sup> *The Chronicles of Paros*, 51.

<sup>6</sup> Herodotus, III, 135.

that she had a daughter named Cleis. The stories are not impossible; but the same cannot be said respecting legends that represent her as enamored of the beautiful Phaon, and as jumping from the precipice of Leucadia.<sup>1</sup> These are mere inventions of Greek comedy. One can give no more credence to the traditions that represent Sappho as having been a woman of dissolute manners. Because she sang much of love, men attributed to her all its follies, without even distinguishing between the passions depicted in her *Epithalamia*, and those which she may have felt herself. The truth is probably much less romantic. Sappho was above all a poetess. She kept a school of lyric poetry in which young girls were trained to recite her songs. Rival schools of like character are mentioned in her verses. For the women at Lesbos enjoyed a degree of liberty such as was scarcely known in later Greece. In the schools of poesy, among the feminine artists, there naturally arose ardent friendships as well as hatreds and jealousies. All this we find in Sappho's verse. Attic comedy made sport of it and travestied the truth as it chose. And that Sappho herself sometimes felt the passions she so eloquently pictured we need not deny. What is certain is that, if she had had the ill repute sometimes ascribed to her, the Mitylenians would not have asked her to celebrate in nuptial odes so many legitimate unions, nor would they have continued to give her the honors of which Aristotle speaks.<sup>2</sup> Her real literary glory, however, is not at all obscured and is beyond discussion.

Sappho's poems formed in ancient times nine books, including odes in various metres, epithalamia, elegies, and hymns. We should have only the débris of them, if Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Longinus had not had the happy thought of citing two odes almost entire.<sup>3</sup> The variety in her poems seems to have been in form rather than in subjects; for really Sappho is above all the extoller of love and beauty. What does change in the poems is the occasion for love and the nature of the sentiment connected with it, which are now more personal and now more general, now joyous and now sad. And hence arise the changes of rhythm, which denote a polished and delicate art. The lord of her thought is always Eros, whom she sings about with an original, exquisite blending of passion, artlessness, and grace.

The beauty of which she sings is ever smiling and sweet; it is rather that of lovely Aphrodite than that of majestic Athene. "O

<sup>1</sup> [On the Leucadian Rock and its significance, consult Menander, *Λευκ.*, fr. 1; Anacreon, fr. 19; Strabo, X, 2, 8 and 9 (p. 452). — Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> *Rhet.* II, p. 1398, B. 12. Bekker.

<sup>3</sup> To these two odes must be added a third (four mutilated strophes), recently found on papyrus (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, v. 1, n. 8), which seems to have been addressed to Charaxus, the brother above mentioned.

pure, rosy-armed Graces, daughters of Zeus,"<sup>1</sup> is the language of one of her odes. Philostratus, apropos of this, notes that Sappho has a decided preference for the rose, constantly extolling it and loving to compare with it the prettiest of her companions. "Her verses," says Demetrius, "are full of love, halcyons, and spring-time." Even the toilet-table did not seem superfluous to her. She makes fun of a rival who does not know how elegantly to arrange the folds of her dress.<sup>2</sup> To another she said: "Wax not proud over a mere ring."<sup>3</sup> What more feminine trait than this love of flowers and of splendid and well-adorned beauty?

The charm of this beauty throws Sappho into an ecstasy sometimes merely pleasing and sometimes violent. In the mutilated state of her extant verses, we cannot always tell whether it is she who speaks or whether she represents some lover as speaking; but it matters little; for whether she sings in her own name or in that of a personage more or less fictitious, it is always from her own heart that she sings; and the heart living in her verses is ardent and passionate: —

"I am all aflame with longing."

"Love tortures me, weakening my very frame; both sweet and bitter is it, and a monster indomitable."

"Love sways my soul like the mountain wind that falls upon the oaks."<sup>4</sup>

The spirit of Sappho shows especially in the following passage, where the sweetness of the images in the first verses makes so marked a contrast with the highly colored picture of intense emotion in the last: —

"He who sits before thee seems like the gods to me; and from very near thee, he hears thy voice, so sweet,

"So sweet thy pretty smile, that melts my heart within my breast. At sight of thee, my voice fails me,

"My tongue dries up, a subtle fire creeps along beneath my skin, my sight is troubled and my ears ring;

"I am damp with perspiration; a tremor seizes my whole being; my face is pale as the withered grass, and I feel myself at the point of death."<sup>5</sup>

These admirable verses, imitated by Theocritus, translated by Catullus, and then by Racine, have continued to be the eternal type of that violent, profound love, which takes possession of the whole being, affects it to the marrow, and becomes akin to torture.

The *Epithalamia* appear to have had an important place in Sappho's work. Judging from the extant fragments, they con-

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 65; Dem. *Περὶ Ἐφευέλαις*. 166, in Spengel, *Rh. Gr.*

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 35.

<sup>4</sup> Frs. 23, 40, 42.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. 2.

tained less of passion than the other odes, but more of naïve picturesqueness. In no other verse did Sappho come so close to popular song. With consummate, but discreet, cleverness, she reproduced its short, but almost childlike expressions, its repetitions of words, its resumptions, its apparent hesitations, sometimes its rather coarse gayety; and all this in short metres, mingled with refrains. Her pleasantries about the country bridegroom and the doorkeeper at the wedding were celebrated. Of the latter, she said:—

“The doorkeeper’s feet are seven fathoms long; and his sandals are made of five layers of ox-hide. Ten cobblers toiled to make them.”<sup>1</sup>

The same simplicity, so like the spoken language, is found in the following passage, in which she gayly sets forth the tallness of the bridegroom:—

“Raise the ceilings of the house,  
O Hymenæus,  
Raise them high, ye carpenters,  
O Hymenæus,  
The bridegroom comes, as tall as Ares,  
O Hymenæus,  
Taller than a stalwart man,  
O Hymenæus.”<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere she compares a young bride to a pretty fruit, a sweet, ripe apple, blushing deeply at the top of the tree.

“By the fruit-pickers wast thou forgotten. Forgotten? Nay, rather they could not reach thee.”<sup>3</sup>

The correction has very naïve charm.

One more translation must be given before dismissing the subject. It is that of the fine ode cited by Dionysius, which is almost a summary of Sappho’s art, her emotion, grace, elegance, and sparkling and pure winsomeness:—

“Goddess on the shining throne, immortal Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, skilled in cunning; let not, I pray thee, O Goddess, my heart succumb to my calamity and suffering.

“Come to me, as thou camest of yore on hearing my petition, when thou didst leave the golden palace of thy father to come to me.

“Thy car was drawn by swift, pretty sparrows; and above the dim earth, their wings threshed the air with urgent stroke, bearing thee from the sky through the realm of ether.

“Without delay were they present. And thou, Happy One, smiling with thy lips immortal, didst ask me my troubles and wherefore I had called thee;

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 91 (following Bergk).

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 93.



"And what wishes my feverish heart was cherishing. 'Whom wouldst thou gain for thy affection? Who makes thee suffer, my dear Sappho?'

"'She who now flees from thee, very soon shall seek thee; though she refuse thy presents, to thee will she devote herself; even if she love thee not, soon shall she love thee, despite herself.'<sup>1</sup>

"Come then to-day again; withdraw from me my anxious care; fulfil the wishes of my heart, and come thyself and help me."<sup>2</sup>

Sappho was much in vogue among the Alexandrians, and especially was imitated by Theocritus. Her childlike and somewhat designed charm, and her elegant, sober dignity, are just the qualities that would be liked by an overrefined age. There is, however, in her poetry more of genuine simplicity, more that is childlike, than in her imitators; and this quality constitutes her peculiar excellence.<sup>3</sup>

**6. Anacreon.**—The real successor of the Lesbian poets is the Ionian Anacreon. He too, is a singer of love, but with more polished elegance; and sometimes intellect supplants passion in his work.

He was born at Teos, about the middle of the sixth century, and passed part of his life at Samos, with the tyrant Polycrates; and part at Athens, with Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus. After the death of Hipparchus, by assassination, in 514, Anacreon probably took refuge in Thessaly, with one of the great princely families of that land. He died in age—at eighty-five according to the pseudo-Lucian;<sup>4</sup> in several of his verses he himself mentions his old age, and tradition represents him ordinarily with the features of an old man. One or two of his fragments show that at some time in his life he bore arms; he tells, probably in imitation of Alcæus and Archilochus, how he fled, leaving his shield behind. The incident, in part at least imaginary, refers to the time of his youth, when Teos, his fatherland, was invaded by the Persian general Harpagus (545). At any rate, there is nothing of the professional soldier in Anacreon, nor of the mercenary adventurer; he was a court poet, fond of pleasure, who spent half a century crowning himself with roses, singing of love and wine, and then, keeping to the end his frolicsome good humor, continued in the memory of men as the ideal of amiable, brilliant cleverness.

In the Alexandrian epoch his works formed five books. Only very short fragments are extant, almost all being bits of love songs

<sup>1</sup> Κούκ ἐθέλουσα, as given in Bergk.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the ancients named, besides Sappho, another poetess, Erinna, whom they called her friend and pupil. Erinna was the author of a miniature epic, the *Distaff* (three hundred verses), of which little remains. The pretended relations of Sappho and Erinna are wholly legendary; the *Distaff* has the appearance of being a much later, possibly an Alexandrian, poem.

<sup>4</sup> *Macrob.* 26.

and festal ballads. However, he composed elegies also, and epigrams, and perhaps a few hymns. But the inspiration of all his poems, not even excepting the hymns, was like that of the odes. The hymns were said to have been composed rather for social than for religious festivals, and to have lacked gravity. The tyrant Polycrates, who kept the poet so long at the royal court, was an unscrupulous adventurer, though refined in his tastes — something like the Italian princes of the Renaissance. In this brilliant, but not too moral, world, Anacreon was perfectly at ease.

"I wish to sing of the delicious Eros, the god with abundant, floral crowns. He is the master of the gods, the subduer of mankind."<sup>1</sup>

love is

This is the tone, and one might say, the theology of Anacreon. On the throne of Zeus, half serious and half smiling, luxurious Eros sits, and there plays king of the world — king still powerful, and not without majesty. The Eros of Anacreon is high above the petty Eros of the Alexandrians, who is no more than god of the boudoir. Anacreon's Eros is forceful and inspires fear: —

"Eros, like a butcher, has struck me with his great cleavers, and thrown me into the turbulent current of the stream."<sup>2</sup>

"The toys of Eros are delirium and insanity."<sup>3</sup>

Elsewhere he speaks of leaping from the precipice of Leucadia, which in the ecstasy of his passion, he is ready to approach.<sup>4</sup> But we must not be deceived; the poet's jest shines out through the violence of the language. The leap in Leucadia probably never killed any one — at least, not for being a lover. Anacreon is not one of those who die of love; it is evident enough from his verses that he must have been refused more than once.

His poetry, though sometimes quite free, is more often delicate and graceful: —

"Eros, the god with the golden hair, hit me with a purple ball, and invited me to play with the young girl who wore the broided sandals; but she, as her home is in pretty Lesbos, at sight of my white hairs, made them a reproach to me, and scorning me with her lips, turned to another."<sup>5</sup>

There is much charm in this gentle, indulgent, smiling grace. The same tone is found in these reproaches given to a young girl: —

"Thracian filly, why thy look askance? and why thy rapid flight? Takest thou me to be an awkward horseman?"

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 46.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. 14.

"Know well that I can bridle thee adroitly and, rein in hand, can make thee turn the goal of the race-course.

"Thou runnest across the prairie; light and bounding, freely thou sportest; for thou hast not yet met the horseman who can tame thee."<sup>1</sup>

➤ This is all elegant, yet scarcely equal in seriousness and passion to some of the verses of Sappho which we have cited.

It would seem that Anacreon had lent his art to the expression of the sentiments of Polycrates rather than to the expression of his own. In certain poems he was a lover only in the capacity of a solicitor. Ælian, on the ground that the amours of Polycrates were often reprehensible, praises him for his conduct; the apology, to say the least, is whimsical. Anacreon's chief moral merit — if one may speak in such matters of any moral merit — is first, his hatred for the consent that can be purchased with money;<sup>2</sup> and then his taste for beauty, which kept him from unworthy actions, and made him seek everywhere a measure of elegance.

Some railleries, or satires, were incorporated into the verses of Anacreon in praise of pleasure. The clever poet knew how to deride while smiling, and that with a light yet sure hand.<sup>3</sup> Such playful satire, however, is rare. He said of himself: "My songs are pleasing, and pleasing are my words."<sup>4</sup> And he was right. The gentleness of his songs recalls Sappho, with whom he is sometimes compared. The difference between them, however, is considerable both in style and in matter. Sappho's style, though simpler, has more brilliance at times and bolder relief. In Anacreon, excepting always the necessary reservations, the dominating tone is gracefully prosaic, trickling and insinuating its way with a fluidity distinctly Ionic. Not only is Anacreon's dialect ordinarily Ionic (except for a few Doric and Æolic phrases that are matter of literary imitation), but the general movement of his thought has the suppleness and easy grace by which the Ionians were ordinarily characterized. We may note, too, without pressing the matter, the simple, lively, light brevity of Anacreon's rhythms, which do not appear to have borrowed from his predecessors either the Alcæic or Sapphic strophe, but which in their place contributed some fine equivalents.

**7. Anacreontic Poems.** — Singularly enough, the thing that has done most to give Anacreon his reputation among the moderns is a small collection of poems in the authorship of which he was not concerned. They were composed in the Alexandrian epoch or the Roman period, by amateurs writing in his style. These poets had no intention of deceiving posterity: they were simply clever men

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 33.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, fr. 21, against Artemo.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. 45.

who made the imitations for their own amusement. But posterity was deceived, and that, too, for a long time. For the poems, once so highly esteemed and now perhaps too little prized, are not at all inferior. The ballads called *Love Dampened* and the *Grasshopper* have a true charm; and the poem that gave rise to the highly popular theme:—

“ Would I were the mirror, that thy glance might rest upon me ;  
Would I were the water, that I might bathe thy limbs,” etc.

as a pretty love song, even in an apocryphal ode, could not well be spared. Then, it is interesting for us to see in these verses the idea that certain poets had of Anacreon, while, doubtless, they still read his verses to gather the inspiration of his Muse.

## B. — THE ORNATE LYRIC

**8. General View.**— We have already noticed<sup>1</sup> how great was the importance of the ornate choral lyric in the artistic life of Greece during two or three centuries. This lyric is a true child of the city. In order to understand it, one must bear the relationship constantly in mind. Social life, such as it existed in the Greek city, was what furnished the occasion for its employment, the subjects which it treated, the sentiments animating it, and the resources necessary to render it adequately. We have already mentioned the principal types of the ornate lyric. These types corresponded to the various manifestations of religious or social life in the city, and always to manifestations of a public or semi-public sort: festivals to gods, heroes, princes, or even private individuals, provided that numbers of citizens joined, or were interested or associated, in them. The theme of the ornate lyric is the mythical or historical past of the city, the emotions felt by the collective spirit of the people. The poet's individual ideas, necessarily rare in an epoch when tradition still held sway over men's minds, have no need to be expressed. His personality is veiled. He is the voice of the community. Even the personality of the master of the feast, if it is in honor of some private individual, tends to lose itself in the collective personality of his race or the political party to which he belongs. The sentiments and passions of the individual are nothing compared with the emotions of all. If the individual chanced to forget this, the whole setting of the feast would remind him of it, beginning with the chorus which was to sing the ode. This was composed of citizens — of young men or young women, often from

<sup>1</sup> Chap. VI. 5.



the foremost families of the city. So everything tended to the same end — to the expression of a collective sentiment, under a musical and poetic form which, by its grandeur, nobility, and gravity, should answer to the solemnity of the circumstances.

Just as the lyric poetry of Lesbos or of Anacreon was simple in form, so this poetry was to be rich and magnificent. The first had a short strophe, regular metrical combinations, a style almost popular, and a strictly local dialect. In this poetry, however, the strophes are infinitely amplified and diversified; the style becomes more and more brilliant; and the local dialects were gradually eliminated and replaced by a literary language of Doric character, judiciously mingled with various elements, and particularly with the characteristics of the epic. This development, originating in the very nature of things, was to be the work of several generations. Whereas the Alcaic or Sapphic strophe proved itself from the very beginning a perfect mould for the poetry of Lesbos, the Pindaric triad is the result of a long series of discoveries that arose one from the other out of a steady evolution. Nor were the different types of the ornate lyric all produced at once: they arose gradually from the movement of social life and the progress of art. Hence there are different periods in the history of this lyric: first that of the founders, Thaletas for the pæan and the hyporchema, Aleman for the parthemon, Arion for the dithyramb; then the period of the great technical achievements of Stesichorus, including the appearance of the heroic hymn, and later of the encomium; and finally the period of greatest brilliance, with the masters of the triumphal ode or epinicion, Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides.

A large part of the lyric works that charmed Greece during these three centuries has disappeared. Two poets only — Pindar, and of late years Bacchylides — are still extant, each in a collection of imposing hymns. Hence, it is to them especially that we must go for thoroughly exact information as to the nature of this poetry.

9. Thaletas: the Pæan and the Hyporchema. — Thaletas came from Gortyna in Crete. The author of the *De Musica* puts his date at the beginning of the seventh century. He is said to have come to Sparta at the bidding of an oracle to organize a religious festival that should end a pestilence.<sup>1</sup> He brought from his native land the use of cretic and pæanic rhythms, and some melodies of a new character. These he employed in pæans and hyporchemas to be executed by the youths of Sparta. The literary merit of these poems is wholly unknown. The only thing certain is the rôle attributed to him and his disciples, for he founded a sort of school. This rôle, no doubt, was consider-

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *De Musica*, 42.

able. With these rhythms music entered on a wholly new career. It boldly abandoned the dactyl and the hexameter, which were still used by Terpander. The old traditions were abandoned, and a more flexible, richer, more brilliant poetry resulted. It is remarkable that Sparta, where this musical and literary revolution took place, was the first city in Greece to attain a complete civic organization, and to communicate to the rest of Hellas the notion of a system of collective life absolutely different from that of the Homeric royal families.

\*10. **Alcman: the Parthenion.**—Alcman, too, like Thaletas, Terpander, and Tyrtaeus, is a foreigner. Born at Sardis, probably of a Greek family,<sup>1</sup> in the beginning of the seventh century, he also came to Sparta at the bidding of an oracle, as some say; or, according to others, as a slave. On account of the splendor of her religious and civic festivals, Sparta was then a political and literary centre for the musicians and poets of all lands. Alcman lived there to an old age and composed numerous poems.

His works formed six books, but we have only a few fragments. Some are of regular hymns, others probably of pæans, hyporchemas, or scolia. The ancients attributed to him some love songs also, but the most famous part of his composition was his collection of parthenia.

As the name (*παρθενέιον* or *παρθένιον*) indicates, this was a lyric poem rendered by a chorus of young girls. Certain hyporchemas, such as those of Delos, also called for such a chorus. But the parthenion was no hyporchema, having neither its expressive mimicry nor its rapid dance; it was a variety of prosodion or processional chant. Naturally solemn, it had greater softness and grace when rendered by young women. Sparta was the city above all others for such choruses. With its feast in honor of Artemis and Apollo, with the gymnastic exercises its young women were obliged to take, it had both the necessary occasions for these choruses and the material with which to form them. There needed to be found only an artist to turn these circumstances to profit and initiate a tradition.

That was the work of Alcman; and the nature of his talent had, as it were, predestined him for it. He may be said to have fixed the type of the charming parthenion, which ever after had an important place in Greek lyric poetry, inspiring numerous masterpieces of Simonides, Bacchylides, and Pindar, the great leaders in lyric composition.

Ancient writers tell us little of the strictly musical innovations of Alcman. It is probable, however, that the Lydian mode, so well

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 24.

fitted to the girlish youth of his choruses, owed to him its great popularity. In any event, his reforms in rhythm and metre were important. The metre grew more and more flexible. Dactyls were combined with trochees as in the Lesbian poetry. Tetrameters and trimeters were united in uniform systems or in strophes of varied design. The strophe, though still very short, was sometimes amplified; and particularly the rhythmic mould was modified from one poem to another, so that, in place of the unvarying scheme of the Lesbians, we begin to see the variety of the later great lyric poems. All is still very simple, however, and closely resembles the original forms; but the new direction is clearly indicated, and it is easy to see how the historians of musical theory came in antiquity to attribute to Aleman almost a musical revolution.

The characteristics of his poetry were a kind of grace and a delicate and familiar sweetness. We can no longer judge of his music; but he himself said, in a charming way, "I know the songs of all the birds;" and elsewhere he declared that he had learned to sing from the partridges in the country.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible better to define the free and novel grace of his melodies. His poetry, like his music, is full of elegance and tenderness.

He is said to have composed some love songs to express his personal feelings. They were probably odes in the manner of the Lesbians. A few of our fragments may come from them; but Aleman had no need to compose a love song proper to express his sentiments. Even in hymns to the gods, he prefers to the heroic myths those of grace and tenderness; and especially if his poem was rendered by young girls, he could clothe it with a wavy, luminous atmosphere, and fill it with the amiable gallantry wherein his soul delighted. In the parthenia, it is now Aleman himself speaking in his own name, now the young girls who, as in a drama, are brought into prominence. In either case, the graceful sensibility of the poet was shown. Even in his old age, his imagination, though still one of gallantry, was never insipid:—

"My limbs refuse to carry me, O young maidens, O charming, sweet-voiced singers. Ah! could I be the ceryle, that flies with the halcyons on the crest of the ocean waves, fearless, dark-plumaged bird of the sea in spring."<sup>2</sup>

Such an imagination, with its simile, has nothing in common with the ardor of Sappho. It does not appear that Aleman ever loved as she did. "Love floods my heart," he says in one place, "by the power of Aphrodite, and softens it."<sup>3</sup> That is just the situation: a

<sup>1</sup> Frs. 67 and 25.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 36.

flood of tenderness spreading out in elegant verse, rather than concentrated, devouring passion — such is the inspiration of his poetry.

His style is the very image of his thought — flexible and caressing. Although he wrote in the dialect of Laconia, the general movement of his sentences scarcely calls to mind the Spartan ideal of brief, sententious language. The use of the local dialect is for him a souvenir of the antique; he is still little removed from popular poetry, and does not write for strangers. The march of his style is rather Ionic than Doric; his limpid sentences enfold his subjects as a wave of pure, sweet water might do. He describes, for example, with admirable richness, the sleep of nature: —

“See how the peaks of the mountains sleep, and the low valleys, the promontories, and the torrents, and the tribes of reptiles, fed by the dark earth.<sup>1</sup> The beasts of the mountain, the swarms of bees, the monsters of the gloomy deep, and all the broad-winged birds are given over to sleep.”<sup>2</sup>

The enumeration is both summary and abundant, the details are exquisite, and the effect of the whole is grand. Again he says, with as much grace as force, to some divine companion of Dionysus: —

“Often, on the crests of the mountains, when a splendid feast is charming the gods, thou, with a golden vase in thy hands, like a deep bowl such as the shepherds have, didst milk the lions and prepare a cheese worthy of him who caused the death of Argus.”<sup>3</sup>

The composition of his poems would escape us, had not a long passage of more than a hundred verses, written on papyrus, been brought to light half a century ago from the tombs of Egypt. Mariette sent it to France, and Émile Egger was the first to publish it. Since then many scholars have studied it sedulously. Despite all efforts, however, the papyrus is too much mutilated, and our ignorance of the persons and things mentioned too great, to make possible a complete restoration. However, the things that are manifest are full of interest. And the poem is but a fresh confirmation of what was already known as to the brilliant grace of his imagination and his style, the delight he took in bringing forward prominently the young girls of his chorus, calling them by name, and lavishing on them delicate praise; and it is also a more exact showing of the style of literary and rhythmic composition in his more extended odes.

The poem probably contained twelve stanzas,<sup>4</sup> each having fourteen verses. The stanzas are almost alike, excepting the last verse,

<sup>1</sup> Here some of the words are in dispute.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Seven are extant. According to Bergk, three are missing at the beginning and two at the end.



which seems to have been different for each group of three stanzas. Aside from this, their metrical structure is simple enough.

The poem appears to have been written for a feast of the Dioscuri; it is a parthenion, as is shown by the part which the young girls play in it. In the beginning, the poet develops a mythic narrative, probably the victory of the Dioscuri over the sons of Hippocoön. The central part of the poem was taken up with eulogies addressed to the young girls of the chorus. One may suppose that, at the end, the poet returned to present circumstances, or expressed general truths. In the admixture of myth with allusions to the actual present, we have in germ the composition of an ode of Pindar, but with more of artlessness and less of studied complexity or general harmony.

The tomb of Aleman, according to Pausanias, was beside the monument of the heroes of whom he had sung. If the stern Doric city so completely adopted a poet who, in many ways, seems more Ionic than Spartan in spirit, this is doubtless because no other sang in so brilliant terms of the beauty of her daughters and the sculptural grace of her choruses; these, according to Terpander and Pindar, brought Sparta as great honor as did the valor of her warriors.

**11. Arion: the Dithyramb.** — Arion is sometimes given as a disciple of Aleman, and is, with Aleman and Thaletas, one of the founders of the choral lyric. His two predecessors had introduced as art forms the pæan, the hyporchema, and the parthenion, compositions written in honor of Apollo, and rendered by a quadrangular chorus of three, four, or five files, advancing with harmonious and measured movements. Arion brought to light the dithyramb, which is written in honor of Dionysus, and executed by a circular chorus, the melody being tumultuous and passionate.

Arion was born, according to tradition, at Methymna in Lesbos. His date is indicated approximately by his relations with Periander, the tyrant of Corinth during the last quarter of the seventh century. Arion first visited Sparta, where he won the prize at the Carneonic musical festival;<sup>1</sup> later he went to Italy. But in the interval he lived principally at Corinth, at the court of Periander. A well-known legend from Herodotus<sup>2</sup> states that on his return from Italy, the riches he had acquired roused the cupidity of the sailors on his ship; threatened with being cast into the sea, he obtained leave to sing beforehand a high-pitched nome. The beauty of his song brought close to the vessel a dolphin, on whose back he was carried to Cape Tanarum.

<sup>1</sup> [On the Carneonic Festival, see Hellanicus, fr. 85 M., v. 1. — Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus, I. 174.

Suidas says that Arion wrote "chants" and "proems," forming a total of two thousand verses. The chants, no doubt, were dithyrambs; and the proems, odes for the cithara, like those of Terpander. For in Lesbos he may have made the acquaintance of Terpander's school; and the legend just mentioned represents him as singing a nome. Of the two thousand verses, many of which were apocryphal, nothing remains but a short fragment without authenticity. Hence we can form only an opinion concerning the nature of his rôle in the transformation of the dithyramb.

Aristotle informs us that the primitive dithyramb was a very simple poem, with regular strophes and a refrain. The name of *τραγικὸς χορὸς*, sometimes given to it, shows that the chorus was often formed of persons disguised as satyrs with goat's hoofs (*τράγος*, goat). Suidas declares that Arion was the first to think of introducing into the chorus a group of satyrs reciting verses, but not chanting them. It is hardly probable, for this would have resembled too closely tragedy proper. It is more probable that the originality of Arion consisted principally in making of the popular dithyramb, with its short strophes and noisy refrain, a more refined poem, accompanied with prettier music, and particularly a poem sumptuous in its execution, to correspond with the magnificence of Periander.

**12. Stesichorus: the Heroic Hymn and the Triad.** — With Stesichorus, we leave the period of beginnings to enter upon that of decided progress.

Stesichorus was born, according to the tradition most widely current, at Himera in Sicily. He lived about eighty years, in the second half of the seventh century and the first half of the sixth. His name, which means "Arranger of the Chorus," was probably a mere nickname—his true name being Tisias, according to Suidas. His life is almost unknown. He is said to have recited before the inhabitants of Agrigentum the fable of the horse who wished to take vengeance on the stag, that he might put them on their guard against the tyrant Phalaris. An interesting legend, found as early as Plato, tells that, having related in a poem the unfaithfulness of Helen, he was smitten with blindness; but that, after singing the palinode, he regained his sight. It is certain that Simonides, half a century after his death, spoke of him as classic and named him in his verses as worthy of being at the side of Homer.

His poems formed twenty-six books, a collection three or four times as great as that of Aleman. Pæans, love songs, so-called "bucolic" poems, and hymns of his are cited. The "bucolic" poems—a subject to which we shall return—were probably only hymns of a particular sort. The hymns proper were certainly the most

extensive, and in every way the most important, part of his works.

The word "hymn" was the generic term to designate all poetry chanted in honor of the gods. In a more restricted sense, the hymn was a chant executed by a standing chorus to the accompaniment of the cithara. The immobility of the chorus—which, perhaps, did not exclude certain motions executed on the spot—distinguished the hymn from the pæan, the hyporchema, the prosodion, and the dithyramb.

One of the earliest innovations of Stesichorus was the consecration of his hymns, no longer to the honor of a god, but to the narration of an epic myth. Those whose titles we have are not called "Hymn to Zeus" or "Hymn to Apollo," but are entitled the *Oresteia*, the *Geryoneid*, the *Hunt of the Wild Boar*, etc. One would say, in the just words of Bergk, that they were titles of epic rhapsodies; since they are musical epics, in which the adventures of heroes are developed on a large scale. The *Oresteia* formed two books. These great compositions were evidently designed for the solemn festivals celebrated by the cities in Sicily and Magna Græcia in honor of their pretended founders, Greek heroes of the siege of Troy, whose adventurous *Returns* had been sung by the cyclic poets.

An important reform in rhythms and metres corresponded to this change in the nature of the hymn. The short logæædic strophe of the old lyric poets was no longer sufficient. Stesichorus composed long strophes, whose dactylic members, variously combined with epitrites (—∪—), formed large and ample groups. Furthermore, these enlarged strophes were in turn combined to form still larger groups. Stesichorus invented the triad, or group of three closely connected strophes. His procedure was as simple as it was ingenious. After two strophes exactly alike,—strophe and antistrophe,—he introduced a third, the epode, of a different metre, which, consequently, was sung to another air. The effect produced is evident: first, all monotony disappeared, then the strophe ceased to be the essential unit of the ode. That unit was formed by the triad, which was longer, and so more capable of sustaining the ample developments of lyric narrative. Thus at a single stroke the power of the lyric poem was tripled, and indeed more than tripled, if one thinks that each particular strophe was also enlarged. And this discovery definitely fixed the essential form of the lyric poem. Notwithstanding exceptions, one may say that the triad became the essential form for the Greek ornate lyric. It would be interesting to know how Stesichorus managed to fill the space of his great triad. Un-

happily, we have of his poems only a few titles and fragments. To the titles cited above, we may add: the *Funeral Games of Pelias*, the odes to *Cerberus*, *Cyrnus*, *Scylla*, *Helen* (with the celebrated *Palinode*), *Europa*, and *Eriphyle*, and the *Returns*. Epic myths evidently formed the basis of these poems. There is little doubt that, while drawing his inspiration from tradition, he used great liberty in the arrangement of details. His variations in the story of Helen serve to prove this a fact. Doubtless, too, his manner of telling the story was not much different from that of the epic poets. Epic narratives are found in series, their circumstantial setting is given, and they are told for their own sakes. But lyric poetry connects its narrative with a particular occasion, which is the feast that is being celebrated. It alludes to things present in time and space, never completely losing these from sight. Its narrative does not proceed with regularity in details. It supposes that the facts are known, and boldly passes from summit to summit. The fragments of Stesichorus are too short to permit us to judge his work fully, but they do allow us to catch a glimpse of certain characteristics, which, it may be said, are, *a priori*, necessary ones.

The style of Stesichorus is better understood than the method of his composition. We see that his dialect is a literary, slightly modified Doric, connected only indirectly with the local dialect. It is pan-Hellenic, like the material of his inspiration. His vocabulary constantly recalls that of epic. His sentences, though sometimes rather excessive in length, are full and easy, and rich in epithets. "Had he known," says Quintilian, "how to keep within limits, he would have been the equal of Homer."<sup>1</sup> The longest extant passage of the *Hymns* is a fragment of six verses, showing something of this profuse, yet brilliant, style. It is a passage on the golden cup in which the Sun crosses the ocean at night, and with which Heracles went to seek the oxen of Geryon: —

"Helios, son of Hyperion, embarked in the cup of gold to sail across the ocean to the dark valleys of sacred night — to his mother, to the wife whom he espoused yet a maiden, and to his dear children; and by his side the son of Zeus walked on foot to the groves made shady by thick bay trees."<sup>2</sup>

We must return, however, to the so-called "bucolic" poems. Ælian says that Stesichorus was the first to relate the blindness of Daphnis, and that, in so doing, he introduced the bucolic chants of which that adventure was the subject.<sup>3</sup> Does it follow from this that Stesichorus composed bucolics proper? Evidently not. The

<sup>1</sup> *Inst. Or.* X, 1, 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Fr.* 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Var.* X, 18.



inference deducible from this evidence is merely that Stesichorus gave space in one of his poems to the pastoral legends of Sicily and to the story of Daphnis. There is no reason for believing that this was not done in one of his hymns.

Somewhere, too, he related stories of rather romantic character, notably the adventures of Calyce and Rhadine. Calyce, a young girl in love and disdained by the man she loved, threw herself over the precipice of Leucadia. Rhadine, beloved of a tyrant of Corinth, had fallen into his power; a cousin of the young woman came to deliver her; the tyrant put them both to death; and then, smitten with remorse, accorded them an honorable burial. These are, evidently, true love romances of the type of those that later delighted Alexandrian Greece. But whether Stesichorus told the stories in poems other than hymns is not at all certain. As he had brought the lyric hymn to a dignity comparable with that of the *Iliad*, so he may have made it take also a tone like that of the *Odyssey*, only more familiar and romantic.

But it is principally through the epic grandeur of his inspiration that Stesichorus has become famous. We have already noticed that Simonides associated him with Homer. Antipater of Sidon, speaking in the same vein, said, in one of his epigrams, that the soul of Homer had come to dwell in Stesichorus;<sup>1</sup> and Quintilian, in his day, wrote that Stesichorus had sustained with the lyre the burden of epic poetry.<sup>2</sup> He must have strengthened his lyre to do this, evidently, and so bequeathed to his successors an instrument of wholly new power.

**13. Ibycus: the Encomium.** — Ibycus, born at Rhegium when Stesichorus was an old man, must certainly have owed much to his great predecessor. He was even sometimes considered as the author of the *Funeral Games of Pelias*; and the grammarians often group the two poets together as being somewhat alike in style.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore probable that Ibycus was an imitator of Stesichorus. As such, he would scarcely merit attention, especially since he is to-day so little known; for we have scarcely forty complete verses out of seven books of poems composing his works. But it seems that, in one point at least, he was really original. The hymn, once a religious poem, but treated by Stesichorus as merely heroic, underwent a new and fruitful transformation at the hands of Ibycus. He

<sup>1</sup> *Anthol. Pal.* VII, 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Inst. Or.* X, 1, 62.

<sup>3</sup> Ibycus died at an advanced age. His death gave rise to the famous legend of the "Cranes of Ibycus." [According to this legend, Ibycus was being murdered, when he observed some cranes flying overhead. His exclaiming that these would be his avengers was later inadvertently referred to by his murderers when they saw another flock of cranes. — Tr.]

derived from it the encomium, a hymn purely human, in praise of some contemporary.

Living, as did Anacreon, at the court of Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, he composed, as also did Anacreon, numerous love songs, which are sometimes classified as a kind of monodic poetry. But this classification is only a conjecture, and is rendered very improbable by the nature of the verses still preserved. For even in those fragments in which the tone is most personal, one recognizes the great choral strophe created by Stesichorus. It was, then, in his hymns that Ibycus sang of love. And to be still more precise, we may say that it was in his encomia. The court of Polycrates was an ideal theatre for such poetry. The innovation had so much success that, from the next generation on, all the rulers of the Greek world wished to have at their feasts similar poetic treats; and so the encomium as a type of poetry became well established. If the amorous poems of Ibycus were ornate choral lyrics, it may be doubted whether they expressed his own sentiments. It is much more likely that their sentiments should be ascribed to Polycrates. For, like Anacreon, Ibycus must often have been obliged to serve as the mouthpiece for the expression of his protector's wishes. This, so far as we can judge, he did with a refined nobility, imitating both the fulness of Stesichorus and the vivacity of Sappho. The poetic form of the encomium can be better treated, however, when we come to deal with better-preserved monuments. Here it needs only to be said that the epinicia of Simonides, of Bacchylides, and of Pindar are but a particular form derived from it.

**14. The Great Masters of the Choral Lyric : Simonides.** — We come now to the age when the choral lyric was perfected. The great poets with whom we are to be occupied needed only to gather the harvest of poetry, so to speak, which the preceding centuries had produced. They had in their hands an instrument of admirable richness, and, each in his own way, they played with supreme skill.

Simonides comes first in point of time. He was born at Iulis in the little island of Ceos, about 556.<sup>1</sup> When Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, began to seek artists and poets, Simonides, then some thirty years of age, was one of those who came to Athens. Here he met Lasos of Hermione and Anacreon. The murder of Hipparchus scattered this brilliant group. Simonides went to Thessaly to live with the Scopadæ and Aleuada, who kept their courts at Pharsalia and Larissa. He probably lived many years with the Scopadæ, for he dedicated to them numerous poems. Some vague catastrophe,

<sup>1</sup> This follows from his own testimony. In an epigram written in 476, he gives his age as eighty. Cf. Simonides, fr. 147.

probably the falling of a roof during a feast, appears to have almost destroyed the family. Simonides, saved by some happy chance, celebrated the dead in a hymn. The well-known legend concerning the aid given to Simonides by the Dioscuri is connected with this incident. The first Persian War, however, appears to have been the cause of his leaving Thessaly. He returned to Athens, where he composed an elegy in honor of those who died at Marathon. And Æschylus himself competed with him in a poem on the subject, only to be defeated. In the time of the second Persian War, Simonides was a friend of the leading chiefs of Greece, and composed verses in honor of the heroes of her independence. In 476, at the age of eighty, he was again at Athens, where he won a prize in a dithyrambic contest. Despite his age, he still went on distant voyages. He travelled to Sicily and Magna Græcia, where he was received with honor by Hiero of Syracuse, Thero of Agrigento, and Anaxilaus of Rhegium. At Syracuse he met his great rival, Pindar, and his own nephew, Bacchylides. The scholiasts say that Pindar was on bad terms with the two poets of Ceos; whatever may be the truth about the story, it is certain that Simonides enjoyed great influence with the Sicilian tyrants. He is even said to have prevented war from breaking out between Hiero of Syracuse and that ruler's brother-in-law, Thero. The poet probably died at Syracuse; at least his tomb was pointed out there. According to Suidas he lived to be eighty-nine years old.

In the course of his long life he composed a multitude of works. His epigrams, already mentioned, were numerous. He also cultivated the elegy and almost all the varieties of choral lyric. Of his rich productivity, we have only about a hundred fragments. Some, fortunately, are long and beautiful enough to be of considerable interest still.

Simonides was a man of reflection and keen observation of manners. He had met many men and done much thinking. A number of his apothegms were famous. His verses contain a much greater amount of moral philosophy than those of Stesichorus and Ibycus. He was regarded as the heir of the great elegiac poets; and in the cultivation of elegiac poetry he had acquired the habit of thinking sententiously. His lyric fragments are filled with general maxims. The dialogues of Plato show that his poems were among those to which the cultivated minds of Athens loved to resort for concise statements of proverbial wisdom. Simonides was quoted in the conversation of the educated almost as Horace has been since. His philosophy is above all a polite wisdom derived from experience and an indulgent spirit, from resignation smiling before inevitable

evil or relative and partial good. He declares somewhere that one must regard life as play and take nothing too seriously.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, by an image in the style of Pascal or of Bossuet, he compares a hundred or a thousand years to a point in the infinity of time.<sup>2</sup> The enmity found in public life seemed to him as natural as the law by which certain birds have a crest.<sup>3</sup> Molière's *Philinte*<sup>4</sup> could not have said this better. You need not tell Simonides of perfect, absolute virtue. "I shall not seek," said he, "that which cannot exist." Moderate honesty, incapable of pleasure in ill-doing, was enough for him, inasmuch as to do ill under constraint was not being dishonest. "Necessity triumphs even over gods."<sup>5</sup> He speaks of the gods with respect in general, conforming to religious and poetic tradition. At times, however, he uses a light tone concerning them, which the ancients themselves noted; for example, speaking in praise of an athlete, he did not shrink from saying, more wittily than respectfully:—

"Neither the strength of Pollux nor the iron limbs of the son of Alcmena could have sustained his attack."<sup>6</sup>

This mobility of spirit, with its indifferent and sceptical features, led him one day to a serious inconsistency. After having been the guest and friend of the Pisistratidæ, he wrote an encomium on the murderers of Hippias—Harmodius and Aristogiton. Whatever pretext he might offer in excuse for this insult, it is to be feared that in it he showed less character than talent.

The ancients at times even accused him of venality. But the reproach is probably unjust. It is based on the fact that Simonides, unlike his predecessors, obtained from his verses a regular income. This merely proves, however, that the situation of the lyric poets had changed. Their art was henceforth sufficiently in demand with the princes and in the cities to have a market value. They lived by their verses as did sculptors by their statues and painters by their pictures. Pindar himself, though praising the ancient custom and censuring the recent one, in reality followed the latter. There is, accordingly, no conclusion to be drawn against Simonides because his ability won him wealth.

The artist in Simonides is like the man. As his character is influenced by diversity of circumstances, so his talent can assume every tone. Generally he is elegant, but simple. He is spirited, graceful, persuasive; but he is powerful, also, and above all pathetic. He is

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 68.

<sup>4</sup> *Philinte* is a character in Molière, *Le Misanthrope*.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Fr. 8.



admirable for the sweet pathos in which, in the judgment of the ancients, no one was his equal.

He wrote in modified Doric, like Stesichorus and Ibycus. His vocabulary is relatively simple. Though he knew as well as any one how to form pretty epithets with compound words, he could also dispense with them. Often he puts vivid images before us in few words. His sentences are ordinarily concise and clear. In his brevity one feels the elegiac poet; but he knows how to connect artfully his short sentences into subtle passages of dialectic reasoning, or heap them one upon the other to excite pity by the accumulation of delicate and touching details. The long fragment of his ode to the Scopadæ, from which we obtained above his definition of moderate honesty, is a very curious example of flexible, clever dialectic. One would think it a discourse of Horace — informal, smiling, full of good humor and vivacity. Nothing is less like the ordinary majesty of Pindar. In the following verses, however, the tone of treatment rises with the subject; they are a fragment from an ode on the battle of Thermopylæ: —

“Illustrious is the fate and glorious the destiny of those who perished at Thermopylæ: their tomb is an altar; our lamentation for them is a song; our mourning is a eulogy of praise. Neither rust nor wasting time can destroy such a monument. The urn that holds the ashes of these heroes has the most brilliant polish that Greece can give. See, if you will, that of Leonidas of Sparta, whose glorious valor shines in imperishable splendor.”<sup>1</sup>

Quite different is the perfect example of natural pathos, touching and sweet, already spoken of, found in a celebrated passage from the lamentations of Danaë, who was exposed, with her child, on the sea in a frail boat. It is as if we were reading an exquisite passage of Euripides.

“In this exquisitely built wherry, carried along by furious winds and tossing waves, pale with fear, tears covering her cheeks, she took her beloved Perseus into her arms and said: ‘O my child, what trouble is mine! Thou, child, art sleeping and thy young heart rests in this tossing, brass-nailed boat, in the darkness of night, with its dread shadows. When the tall wave passes thy pretty locks, thou dost not heed more than if it were a murmur of the wind — child half-hid by thy purple coverlet, charming face. Ah! if for thee, danger were danger, then would thy keen ear listen to my speech. I pray thee, little one, sleep: would that the sea, too, were sleeping — the great scourge! Show us, Father Zeus, show us a will more clement — if my words seem bold, for my child’s sake, forgive me their boldness.’”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 37.

A rather long fragment of elegy (fourteen verses) on the following theme from Homer, *Οἷηπερ φύλλων γενεή, τοίη δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν*, shows us in the Ionic dialect the same qualities of judicious grace as are found in the lyric fragments. Here again it is a sage, a friend of moderation, who chats amiably with his reader, and recommends to him, with more of persuasive finesse than sublimity, the philosophy of good nature.

Though the fragments of Simonides show us rather clearly his spirit and style, they are too short to give the idea of his method of composition. This is the more to be regretted, because he was the first to compose epinicia, or triumphal odes. His epinicia were famous and became classic. It would be interesting to compare them with those of Pindar and Bacchylides, and see how the inventor of the type solved the delicate problem of putting interest into a subject which, in itself, might seem rather dull; how he managed to combine beautiful fictions of myth with reality, and to combine in unity of tone the variety of his apparent digressions. The only thing we can say with certainty is that, like Pindar, he gave much space to myths. This is seen in the legend of his rescue by the Dioscuri, who were said to have saved him because of the eulogy he had consecrated to them in his ode on the Scopadæ. The legend recounted that the Scopadæ had been displeased, but that the Dioscuri had shown him their gratitude for his favor. The Dioscuri, in fact, might well have rewarded him; but the allegation relative to the discontent of the Scopadæ proves merely that the legend dates from a time when the essential laws of the epinicion had been forgotten. In the time of Simonides, no man would have thought of being offended if the gods were given part of his proper glory. Myth was then regarded as the history of the divine realm and formed the best of all poetic material. It is probable that Simonides, like Pindar, drew his myths from the cycle of legends relative to the family of his hero, or his hero's fatherland, or the games which he had won. No Greek of this period would have dreamed of taking offence. One of the merits of Simonides certainly was to understand this, and so to trace for his successors the path that they should follow.

Simonides' memory was kept very bright in Athens. Aristophanes often cited him. Plato and Xenophon explain his language, oppose his statements, cite his authority. For Simonides, with his Ionic grace, his knowledge of life, his elegant clearness, is almost an Athenian. And his clever, persuasive art was fitted to please the contemporaries of Euripides and Aristophanes.

15. **Pindar.** — "Pindar," said Quintilian, "is far in the lead of the

nine lyric poets" (*novem lyricorum longe princeps*). He was no more an innovator than Simonides, strictly speaking, so far as concerns the technique of his art. But he brought to lyric poetry the boldest imagination, the loftiest accent, that had been heard till then; and to express his inspiration, he always found, in the matter of rhythms and words, the most expressive and beautiful forms. By a happy circumstance, we have more than forty of his poems preserved intact, reflecting faithfully the image of his genius.<sup>1</sup>

Pindar was born at Cynoscephalæ, near the gates of Thebes, of which city he was a citizen. His birth appears to have been in 521, about twenty years after that of Simonides. A passage in one of his odes<sup>2</sup> leads us to think that, although a Theban, he belonged to the illustrious Doric family of the Ægidæ, which had its branches in various cities of the Peloponnesus at the time of the Dorian migrations. Pindar devoted himself early to lyric composition. The gods themselves, in his infancy, had commended to him his vocation: one day some bees dropped honey on his lips while he slept. Bœotia gave him his first teachers; and he is said to have studied under the flute-player, Scopelinus; then with the poetesses, Corinna and Myrto. He came also to Athens, where he is said to have met the dithyrambic poet, Lasos of Hermione, and several others. The first certain incident of his poetic life is the composition, when he was only twenty, of the *Tenth Pythian Ode*, in 501. In the time of the Persian Wars, Thebes openly took sides with the invaders. Polybius accuses Pindar of having, under these circumstances, encouraged the anti-Hellenic tendencies of his fellow-citizens.<sup>3</sup> But the verses cited in support of his assertion do not appear to have quite the bearing he ascribes to them. It is certain, too, that Pindar went from Thebes to the patriotic Ægina, where he remained, composing numerous odes, during almost the whole time of the second Persian War. Later he is seen celebrating again and again the rôle of Athens in the Persian Wars. For this celebration the city is said to have rewarded him splendidly.<sup>4</sup> These facts are none too well

<sup>1</sup> BIBLIOGRAPHY: Principal editions; Bœckh (2 vols. in 4 parts), Leipsic, 1811-1821, a monumental work; Dissen, Leipsic, 1830 (revised by Schneidewin, 1843-1847), with full commentary; Bergk, in *Poetæ Lyrici Græci*, I (*sup. cit.*); Christ (text ed.), Teubner, 1873, and, with prolegomena and notes, Teubner, 1896; Schröder, Teubner, 1900. English edition with notes by Fennell, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1893; *Olympian and Pythian Odes*, Gildersleeve, New York, 1885; *Nemean and Isthmian Odes*, Bury, 2 vols., London and New York, 1890.

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Consult A. Croiset, *La poésie de Pindare*, Paris, 1st ed., 1880; C. Gaspar, *Essai de chronologie Pindarique*, Brussels, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> *Pyth.* V, 100.

<sup>3</sup> Polybius, IV, 31.

<sup>4</sup> Isocrates, *Antidosis*, 166.

in agreement with the rôle ascribed to him by Polybius. During the fifteen or twenty years after the battle of Salamis we see Pindar in the very height of his fame, associating with the princes and the great men of all parts of the Greek world: Hiero of Syracuse, Thero of Agrigentum, Arcesilaus of Cyrene, Chromius of Agrigentum, and many others. Although lyric poets were not always expected to supervise in person the rendering of their poems, yet he must have made numerous voyages. In 476, apparently, he went to Syracuse. He saw Mount Ætna, which he describes magnificently, and he visited the principal cities of Sicily. His residence with Hiero and Thero appears to have continued several years. Probably he also went to Cyrene, if one may judge from a few picturesque words on that city in an ode to Arcesilaus. The ancients enumerate also a king of Macedon, Alexander I, son of Amyntas, among Pindar's admirers and patrons; and it is known that, in memory of these relations, Alexander the Great, a century later, while attacking Thebes, spared the home of the Theban poet. The last ode that we can date with certainty is the *Eighth Pythian*, addressed to an Æginetan in 446. One biographer says that Pindar died at eighty, consequently in 441. His glory was immense even in his lifetime. An ode that he wrote for Diagoras of Rhodes was inscribed in letters of gold on the temple of Athene at Lindos. Pindar was classic immediately after his death. Herodotus already cited him. The Athenian comic writers parodied and quoted his verses; and this was really a way of doing him homage. Plato borrowed some of his fine thoughts and expressions.

His poetry, divided first into seventeen books, and then into nine, included all the types of the choral lyric: hymns, pæans, hyporchemas, prosodia, parthenia, encomia, threnodies, and epinicia. The total formed probably twenty-four thousand cola. Of this, we have about one-fourth: four complete books of the seventeen (the epinicia); or, of the twenty-four thousand cola, about six thousand, five hundred of which are in fragments. It is much to be regretted that we can no longer appreciate from adequate knowledge the sweet charm of his parthenia, the sprightly, familiar liberty of his scolia and hyporchemas, or the brilliance of his dithyrambs. But the misfortune is less than it would seem to be at first sight. For his epinicia have a great range of tone, approaching now this, now that, type; and the fragments enable us to complete somewhat satisfactorily the indications given by the extant odes. Accordingly we can form a fairly just and definite idea of Pindar.

His thought, regarded from whatever point of view, impresses one immediately as grand and lofty. His religious and moral phi-



losophy is quite different from that of Simonides. For while the latter admonishes us to regard life as a mere pastime, the former habitually takes it in all seriousness. Pindar is really serious. He is a Dorian, perhaps by race, and at least in his tendencies, is a lofty, majestic spirit, a friend of law and order. There is, to be sure, nothing ascetic in him; he is too much a poet and a Greek for that. Though he can adapt himself to circumstances and even smile, yet for the most part he seeks the noble and the sublime.

His gods have an incomparable grandeur. They have the same names as those of Homer, but often they resemble the God of Bossuet: —

“God alone,” he says in one place, “brings all to pass according to His expectation — God, who overtakes the eagle in his rapid flight, and outruns the dolphin in the depths of the sea — God, who humbles the proud spirit of mortals, and transfers from one to another the glory that prevents them from all becoming old.”<sup>1</sup>

No miracle coming from the divinity seemed to him hard to believe, for he could assign no limits to God’s power.<sup>2</sup> The gods know all. It is not a crow, as in the legend, who informs Apollo of the unfaithfulness of Coronis, but his own divine insight — “the swiftest of messengers”; for “deception comes not nigh him; and neither mortal nor god could, by taking thought, elude his never failing sight.”<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere, when the god interrogates the Centaur Chiron about the nymph Cyrene, the Centaur answers: —

“Thou, who canst not glance at error, speakest thus owing, doubtless, to some mere smiling fantasy. Dost thou ask me the lineage of this maid — thou, O king, who knowest the goal to which all things tend, knowest all the ways along which they go; and how many leaves in spring the earth puts forth, and how many pebbles, in the sea and in the rivers, are stirred by the caresses of the waves — knowest what is to be, and the causes of all that shall come to pass?”<sup>4</sup>

When the old legends do not suit the pure idea that he has conceived of the gods, he rejects or alters them, as we have seen in the story of Coronis. And there are plenty of other examples. There was a legend that Heracles one day strove alone against three gods: —

“Speak not such language, O my lips! Blasphemy against the gods is but foolish wisdom; and boastfulness, uncalled for, is folly. Enough of your senseless babbling. Neither war nor contest may approach the immortals.”<sup>5</sup>

“O son of Tantalus,” he says elsewhere, “I shall speak of thee otherwise than did our fathers. . . . More fitting is it for man to

<sup>1</sup> *Pyth.* II, 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* X, 77.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* III, 46–54.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* IX, 75 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Olymp.* IX, 54.

“speak in high praise of the gods : then if he err, his fault is not so great.”<sup>1</sup>

Whence came to Pindar these high ideas? From Orpheus? From Pythagoras? or from some other philosophic doctrine? His theology has not the air of a sect or a school; it is not esoteric. He certainly read Xenophanes, however, and, like many other noble minds of his time, he felt the influence exercised on religious conceptions generally by the progress of Greek thinking.

His moral tone shows the same spirit. He follows tradition, yet purifies it. Man's weakness is great, yet not beyond the reach of hope. With the aid of the gods, man can arrive at happiness and glory.

“Ephemeral creatures, what are we, and what not? Man is but the dream of a shadow. Yet when the gods throw on him one bright ray, a brilliant light surrounds him, and his life is sweet.”<sup>2</sup>

Pindar abounds in strong expressions on human misery, but his melancholy is neither feeble nor discouraged. In spite of all, he is the bard of happy life. The good things of which he sings are not too refined, but simply youth escorted by love and beauty, and plain things such as riches, power, and glory. His ideal is derived from the brilliant performances really given at Olympia, Delphi, and Nemea.

The condition of happiness is virtue, in the ancient sense of the term,—which is to say, a combination of intellectual, moral, and physical qualities. It comes from the gods. Human industry can achieve nothing without the graces—that is, without the gods. The noblest virtues are those which, with their own hands, the gods have planted in human hearts. And it is not merely the individual, but the whole race, that the gods make weak or strong. The virtues of the individual come to him from his race. A strongly aristocratic sentiment permeates all of Pindar's conceptions.

Morality is not something to parley with, but something which gives commands and imposes laws. Pindar does not, like Simonides, speak in fine-spun dialectic; he proclaims eternal truths and gives oracular responses.

But, we may ask, what responses and what truths? If he speaks of the city, his ideal is one of good order and discipline. The old Doric laws of Ægimius, the divine *eunomy* guaranteed by the government of the wise, this is his wish. In private life, to honor the gods and to respect one's parents are the first necessary maxims. One should be just toward men—nay more, one should

<sup>1</sup> *Olymp.* I, 54-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Pyth.* VIII, 135 ff.

be gentle, prompt to pardon, a foe to flattery, a friend to truth. Of the goodness of Thero and the charm of his friendship, he has said exquisitely: —

“The grains of sand defy enumeration: but the joys which he has brought his fellow-men, who shall number?”<sup>1</sup>

“Friends are useful in many ways, especially in trouble; but joy, too, searches for friendship’s faithful glance.”<sup>2</sup>

It goes without saying that, among the essential virtues, he does not forget the moderation so often celebrated by the moralists of Greece, nor the courageous energy (*τόλμα*) of which his ordinary clients, the victors in the athletic games, constantly gave him the example.

This natural loftiness of ideas marks his elegies with a character of high dignity. Pindar, though he passed his life in praise of men, is no flatterer. He is conscious of his own merit and maintains his independence. In the words of a biographer, he would live for himself, not for others. His poetic pride kept him from base subservience. To express the beauty of his own songs, he has a multitude of brilliant, original expressions: he compares himself to a sculptor creating winged, living statues;<sup>3</sup> or to the eagle of Zeus, that, with a stroke of its wings, mounts quite to heaven, leaving far below him the noisy flock of crows.<sup>4</sup> He knows the worth of the service he renders even to the kings whom he eulogizes; his naming them makes them immortal. This allows him, with the necessary courtesy of eulogy, to maintain the attitude of a free man. He is the friend, and, in glory, almost the equal, of his princely patrons. With prudence and good taste, he can even make them accept wise counsel. He excels in this delicate task. His odes for Hiero and Arcesilaus show clearly what he thought he had the right to say, and under what conditions. The lessons he addresses to his patrons are general in form even when their intent is particular. There is never an allusion born of malignity, nor even a biting epigram, certain scholiasts to the contrary notwithstanding. To an indiscreet prelate of Louis XIV. that king said: “Father, I like to choose my part in a sermon, not to be forced to take it.” Pindar is no such indiscreet counsellor, neither is he a flatterer for hire. With his innate taste for law, order, and categorical morality, and the proud consciousness he had of his genius, he readily turned his very eulogies into counsels and exhortations.

His literary style, as with all artists of the first order, is marvellously in accord with the nature of his thought. His real charac-

<sup>1</sup> *Olymp.* II, 179.    <sup>2</sup> *Nem.* VIII, 71.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* V, 1 ff.    <sup>4</sup> *Olymp.* II, 154 ff.

teristic, amid all the shades of expression due to diversity of circumstances or of literary types, is a thoroughly original manner of seeing things in a general view and collectively, with a searching, yet synthetic and summary glance. He does not analyze; in this respect he is not Attic, nor even Ionic. In the depiction of an object or an idea, he gives at once the dominant impression, and that with a concentrated, quick vigor. A trait, a word, is sufficient; but the word is incisive, the trait shines like an electric spark. The vivacity of his impressions sometimes resembles the emotion of deep sensibility. We must not be deceived, however; all these emotions are felt in the lofty region of general ideas and pretty images. His lyric poetry, to use the Greek expression, is *hesychastic*; he has more pure reason and less real sensibility than Simonides. The absence of analysis brings into relief his summary style; but on the other hand, since no passion carries him away to prejudice, the general movement of his thought is noble and magnificent. Horace compares him to an overflowing river.<sup>1</sup> The image is a beautiful and a just one. A torrent with its mass of water, troubled and deep, well represents the immense effectiveness of his synthetic style, sometimes tumultuous in detail, yet animated, as a whole, by an impetus simple and imposing.

His dialectic is the modified, literary Doric which, after Stesichorus, became the language of convention for the polite lyric.

His vocabulary is one of extreme boldness. His work abounds above all in images, brilliant metaphors, expressive periphrases, epithets, and groups of new and striking words. All visible nature is reflected in his imagination; but at the same time his thought, being naturally philosophic, penetrates and spiritualizes nature. The abstract and the concrete are mingled in his style in the most surprising manner, rendering it both plastic and philosophic, figurative and general. Speaking of the Symplegades, the rocks that approach each other to crush navigators, he says: "The irresistible motion of the rocks that approach each other." Elsewhere, Jason invokes "the rapidly forwarding rush of the winds and waves." Pindar loves to use the plural of abstract nouns, as if to magnify the idea. Likewise, according to Buffon's precept, he loves the word that is "most general," showing not only the particular object, but the character of that object. The victory of his hero is constantly named *τιμά, χάρις, γέρας*, in his verses. All these traits, though more or less common to Greek lyric poets, are found to an unusual extent in Pindar, and impart to his style an extraordinary brilliance. This is true also of the double epithets (*διπλὰ λῆξεις*), which lyric poets

<sup>1</sup> *Odes*, IV, 2, 5-8.



had the right to create freely, but which he employed most, or at least with greatest boldness. Above all, the different types of bold figures which we distinguish in our classifications are mingled in his style and superimposed on one another. Their rays cross, throwing out a thousand lights at once. Nowhere can there be found so often verses that are absolutely untranslatable into an analytic modern language.

His sentences are often brief; but sometimes they are very long, extending through more than a whole strophe. In such cases, they are never periodic after the manner of oratory, but are a flood of souvenirs and images, recalling each other in the poet's mind as his song proceeds. He advances by brusque association of ideas, not by logical succession. The sentences are not joined closely; they seem always on the point of ending, and then go on with but loose connection. As one reads them, they come as if in waves; but they were written for music, and that brought out the true value of the splendid, luminous words of which they are composed.

When Pindar tells a story, he is not, like an epic, or even an Ionic poet, at pains to follow the regular order of events, or to put them successively before our eyes. He proceeds with vivid, sparkling allusions, hurrying from picture to picture, and interspersing these with maxims. It is only a résumé that he traces; but he writes it, as it were, in letters of gold.

The composition of his odes has given rise in modern times to long and fastidious discussions. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the adversaries of the classics, good reasoners, though not highly poetic, and almost strangers to antiquity, were offended or amused by his "digressions." Boileau, for example, judged that, in an ode, "*Souvent un beau désordre est un effet de l'art,*"<sup>1</sup> though without knowing too well just what the phrase "graceful disorder" signified. In our day, scholars who have tried to free Pindar from these traditional reproaches have sometimes rather ridiculously exaggerated the unity of the Pindaric ode. In reality the question is simple enough, and does not merit all the discussion it has called forth.

These pretended digressions, or in other words, the mythic part of the odes, all have a rather intimate connection with the occasion of the victory, in that they are borrowed from the legendary story of the games in which the victory was won, from that of the victor's country, or from that of his family. We have already said, in treating of Simonides, that these legends, for contemporary Greeks, were almost history as well as poetry; as history, they were more inter-

<sup>1</sup> "Disorder is often graceful and then shows the presence of art." — Tr.]

esting than ordinary narrative because they were more beautifully poetic. The individual was so closely associated with his race and city that the eulogy of these latter was, in his eyes, the equivalent of his own.

The art of a poet, especially of a Pindar, could subordinate variety to a certain unity of tone which should make of the whole poem a living work, a *ζῶον ἐν ὅλῳ*, in the neat expression of the Greek philosophers. Nor need we, as do certain German scholars, so restrict this unity that we must try to find in every ode of Pindar either the rigorous development of a general idea, or a sort of ideal portrait of the hero. The unity of the lyric poem did not necessitate such rigor. Every poem had a "lyric idea" which was its centre and its unity. But the lyric idea was due to the music as much as to the poetry. It cannot always be stated in a formal proposition, any more than the musical idea of a symphony can. Enough that a certain interlacing of images and thoughts, recalling one another like the notes of a song, are colored by the poet's imagination so as to leave in the mind of the reader or hearer a clear and distinct general impression. The *Fourteenth Olympic Ode*, so graceful in its brevity, has for its fundamental theme the eulogy of the Graces, goddesses of Orchomenos. Around this central idea are arranged and organized all the secondary ideas given by the circumstances, and the resulting supple unity is delightful. In the *First Pythian Ode*, which has provoked so much discussion, the general idea is both nowhere and everywhere. It is nowhere, if we seek to find it expressed in an abstract manner; yet it inspires the whole poem. It consists essentially in the parallelism so profoundly felt and so strongly expressed between the sensible harmony of the music and the superior harmony of the moral life: or rather, it is in the superposition of the latter on the former, and in the view by which Pindar passes from the splendor of the visible feast to the invisible beauty of virtue, which, though great in the soul of Hiero, that prince must foster still more every day.

Ordinarily the particular ideas grouped under the domination of the principal idea are very simply arranged. In the beginning, the poet mentions the particular occasion for his song; the middle part of the ode is devoted to myths; finally, the poet returns to his hero, enumerates his other victories, and exhorts him to win still more. This plan is sometimes modified, however, or ingeniously complicated; but one may say that it is the normal plan of most of Pindar's odes. The very division of the poem into triads and strophes accentuates its composition. It is rare that the first and the last group of ideas should not each fill a triad in the longer odes; whereas the myths

occupy one, two, or more triads according to the length of the poem. Perhaps the division at the end of each strophe or triad is not absolutely clear: certain phrases begin in one line and finish in the next, and the thought may be similarly carried on; but the general arrangement is quite clear.

Although we no longer have any complete odes beside the epinicia, we may say that the general rules of composition and style were applied elsewhere in a very analogous manner. Even in default of fragments, good sense would lead to such a conclusion.

Pindaric art, in which magnificence and splendor are so originally associated, is in many ways further removed from us than the other forms of Greek art. It corresponds to a culture more particular than that of epic or tragedy. It is the best expression of the aristocratic, semi-Doric civilization of the beginning of the fifth century. It was natural that neither La Motte nor even Voltaire should take much pleasure in it. We are in a better condition to-day to feel its rare beauty and to enjoy in this harmonious creation the most perfect image of a fleeting moment in the ideal life of Greece.

**16. Bacchylides.** — Younger than Pindar by twenty years, Bacchylides, a nephew of Simonides, was born, like his uncle, at Iulis in the island of Ceos. The date was not far from 500. His life appears to have been spent in the exercise of his art and in the travels made necessary thereby, yet one cannot fix its details with precision. He is said to have resided at the court of Hiero at the same time as Simonides and Pindar. In fact, three of his odes were dedicated to the tyrant of Syracuse in 476, 472, and 468. Plutarch says that Bacchylides was exiled from Ceos; yet we know neither the cause nor the date of this exile. One of his odes was written in 452.<sup>1</sup> This is the last date of his life that can be fixed with certainty.

His works, like those of Simonides and Pindar, are in all the varieties of choral lyric poetry. Till the year 1897, only some fifty fragments of his poems were known; and of these, only two or three were of any length. To-day, thanks to an Egyptian papyrus in the British Museum, we possess twenty more or less mutilated poems of his, comprising nearly fourteen hundred verses.<sup>2</sup> Of these twenty poems, the first fourteen are triumphal odes; the other six are of various types. They include, apparently, a heroic hymn, two

<sup>1</sup> *Ode VI.*, to Lachon. Cf. Grenfell and Hunt, *Oxyrrhynchus Papyri* (1889), II, p. 94, n. 18.

<sup>2</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Editio princeps by Kenyon, *The Poems of Bacchylides*, London, 1897. A fine edition by Blass, *Bacchylidis Carmina*, Teubner, 1898. French translation by Desrousseaux, Paris, Hachette, 1898. English translation in prose by Poste, London and New York, 1898.

pæans, and three dithyrambs or fragments of dithyrambs. The triumphal odes are composed after a plan like that of Pindar. This shows that the laws of invention were fixed for the type as early as the time of Simonides. Of the other six poems, the most interesting are certainly the last three, and it is impossible not to regard these as dithyrambs. We have not even one long specimen of this lyric form, though it held so great a place in the history of the origin of tragedy. The first of the three, entitled *Theseus*, is a dialogue in four strophes, between Ægeus, king of Athens, and a chorus representing the Athenians. In summary, it is as follows: *1st strophe (the chorus)*: "What is happening, O king?" *2d strophe (the king)*: "A messenger announces to me the return of a wonderful hero." *3d strophe (the chorus)*: "What sort of hero?" *4th strophe (the king)*: "A very young man, almost a child, followed by two companions." There is no other example in Greek lyric poetry of such a dialogue, which is already very close to drama. This is evidently a mere fragment of a longer poem, but it is singularly instructive. The other two dithyrambic fragments are much mutilated, especially the latter. The former, entitled *Io*, is a pathetic description of the wanderings of Io.

The author of the *Treatise on the Sublime* classifies Bacchylides among the "faultless" poets, whose style is "polished and brilliant at every point."<sup>1</sup> In other words, he considers him a poet of more talent than genius. The fragments long since known justified this appreciation. The new poems, without essentially modifying the impression given by the fragments, allow us to complete it, and, in short, to do Bacchylides somewhat fuller justice. The clever artist was really a charming poet, less original than Simonides, who was his master and model, less grand than Pindar, whom he also imitated at times, but with an alert, copious invention, a lively imagination, a flowing, brilliant style, and a wealth of words truly remarkable. He names himself the "nightingale of Ceos, sweet-voiced as honey," *μελιγλώσσου . . . χάριν Κηίας ἀηδόνος*.<sup>2</sup> The appreciation is perfectly just. His sweetness was, moreover, often associated with poetic grandeur. With finely chosen words, he compares the soaring of his ode, which he is sending over sea to Syracuse, with the flight of an eagle: —

"Cleaving the immense ether, high in air, the eagle, with its swift, tawny wings, messenger of mighty Zeus, who hurls the noisy thunderbolt, trusts boldly to its invincible might; and the birds of song hide themselves in fear. Neither do the peaks of the vast earth restrain it, nor the dread waves of the untiring ocean. It

<sup>1</sup> *Treatise on the Sublime*, c. 33, 5.

<sup>2</sup> III, 93-98.



makes its way through infinite space, exposing its downy plumage to the breezes of the zephyr; and men know its approach."<sup>1</sup>

One sees thoroughly well in this fine passage the analytic process of Bacchylides, so different from the vigorous syntheses of Pindar, but so clever in harmonizing carefulness in detail with grandeur of general effect. He excels particularly in his speeches, which are as copious in his odes as they are brief and rare in those of Pindar. Bacchylides aims, like Simonides, to disclose a complex idea so that the reasoning shall be logical. His work shows, at times, some excellent speeches, brilliant or pathetic by turns, such as that of Cræsus on his funeral pyre, or that of Theseus at the court of Minos.

A striking trait in his epinicia is that, though obtaining his myth, like Pindar, from the traditional sacred sources, one does not always see so clearly why he has chosen such and such a particular episode, or what harmony exists between the sense and color of the myth and the tone of the poem in general. In this respect it seems that Bacchylides composed less artistically or less carefully than Pindar. He seems to seek rather the brilliant expression than harmony of the whole. This may be cleverness growing weary of the observation of rules; it may be also that Bacchylides, showy and superficial, cannot discover, as Pindar can, the thousand hidden meanings in the particular occasion of his song that give a circumstance its true significance. His thought is not especially powerful, though his imagination is ready.

In short, without really being of the first order, Bacchylides was judged by the Alexandrians worthy of a place in their canon among the nine most excellent poets of Greece. And posterity has not adopted a different opinion.

**17. Lesser Poets.**—One would get a very inexact idea of the literary activity of Greece at the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the fifth, if one considered the lyric production of the period as limited to the works of the three or four great poets whom we have just studied.

The truth is that there were lyric poets in abundance. Many a city had its poets as it had its choruses of dancers. Most of them have disappeared without leaving a trace behind; others have left little more than a name. Without entering into useless enumeration, one yet finds some that merit passing mention. Such are Lasos of Hermione in Argolis, who was one of the poets at the court of Hipparchus, and who probably had the honor of inaugurating dithyrambic contests at Athens; Timocreon of Rhodes, athlete and lyric

<sup>1</sup> V, 16-30.

poet, known above all for his hatred of Themistocles; Tynnichus of Chalcis, otherwise unknown, but the author of a celebrated pæan which Plato considered as "perhaps the prettiest of all songs"; Lamprocles, an Athenian author of dithyrambs, who was praised by Aristophanes for the high character of his hymn to Pallas; and finally a little group of poetesses, of whom the most celebrated was Corinna. Born at Thebes or at Tanagra, she was supposed to have taught Pindar lyric poetry, and particularly the "laws of the myths," as one biographer says. This was doubtless the art of employing them properly in triumphal odes, and of "sowing them in handfuls, not from the overflowing sack," as the proverb runs. Other accounts show her as contending for the prize against Pindar himself, and winning it from him. Pausanias, thereupon, malignly supposes that her success was due especially to her beauty.

During the time in which lyric poetry came to perfection, philosophy and history were already beginning their researches for truth, and creating a literature in prose.

## CHAPTER IX

### BEGINNINGS OF PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY: PROSE

1. Prose and the Advent of the Scientific Spirit. 2. Signs Antecedent to the Advent of the New Spirit. 3. Hesitation between Prose and Poetry. 4. The Philosophic Doctrines. 5. The Art of Writing among Philosophic Prose-writers. 6. The Art of Writing among Philosophic Poets. 7. The Logographers: General View. 8. Principal Writers of the Group.<sup>1</sup>

**1. Prose and the Advent of the Scientific Spirit.** — For many centuries, Greece had no literature but poetry. The first works in prose did not appear till the sixth century. Men have tried to explain this late appearance of prose by the ignorance of writing or the lack of papyrus. But these are not the real reasons. In the first place, writing was known in Greece very long before this: the poems of Archilochus could not be preserved except in writing. In the middle of the sixth century, some Greek adventurers in the service of Psammetichus I, king of Egypt, inscribed their names and a few phrases on the limbs of two colossal statues in Nubia; writing, accordingly, was then in common use. Furthermore, the very study of the Greek alphabet proves that the introduction of writing goes back, if not to the fabulous Cadmus, at least to a period quite ancient in the relations between Phœnicia and Greece. As for papyrus, before its importation into Greece in the reign of Amasis, men could dispense with it easily by having recourse to prepared skins (*διφθέραι*). These were a sort of parchment, whose use is attested notably by Herodotus.<sup>2</sup>

And if no works were written in prose, it must be that no need was felt for them. Long before this, the temples had kept lists (*ἀναγραφαί*) of priests and priestesses, and of victors in the games, notes relative to miracles or epidemics, offerings adorned with inscriptions,

<sup>1</sup> BIBLIOGRAPHY: The fragments of the early philosophers have been published in the Didot collection by Mullach, *Fragmenta Philosophorum Græcorum*, I. Particular editions are: Hæraclitus, by Bywater, Oxford, 1878; and Parmenides, by Diels, Berlin, 1897. The fragments of the logographers will be found in the *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum* by G. Müller (Didot Collection), particularly vols. I and II, and the addenda of vol. IV.

Consult P. Tannery, *Pour l'Histoire de la science hellène*, Paris, 1887, where all the fragments of the philosophers from Thales to Empedocles are translated into French.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus, V, 58.

and collections of oracles. In the town halls of the cities, there were lists of kings and magistrates and of treaties, laws, and public acts. But none of this is literature. Historical literature begins only when the depot of archives calls into existence the book of history. Likewise there is no philosophical literature until some man, not content with noting observations of immediate utility, goes beyond these to a synthesis of more general character. The appearance of this new creation, the book of history or philosophy, presupposes a purely intellectual interest. The truth (or whatever is considered as such) excites interest from being so considered, whatever the part of beauty or emotion otherwise connected with it. Poetry had been the natural language of sensibility and imagination. Prose begins with the first germs of a scientific spirit.

**2. Signs Antecedent to the Advent of the New Spirit.** — The new scientific spirit was strongly manifested toward the middle of the sixth century in works of philosophy and history. But it appeared, also, in other branches of thought and even in poetry. We have long seen it in process of formation and growth; and it is proper to recall briefly these manifestations.

After the highly dramatic, passionate poetry of Homer, we have first the cyclic and genealogical poetry, which shows a wish for sequence and chronology; then poetry like the *Theogony*, already philosophic in its desire to reduce Greek theology to a system; and finally, lyric poetry and the elegy, in which moral philosophy holds a considerable place.

In the sixth century Greek religion underwent a rather important change, owing to a considerable development of the mysteries. Whatever their origin, it was then that they attained full splendor. For they responded to a new need of men's spirits, — a need created by the progress of reflection. The former divine justice did not suffice; it must be corrected. Into it, therefore, was introduced more of reason, gentleness, and efficacy. The means of purification offered would appease the anger of the gods, and the "initiation" assured to those who received it a happy destiny after death. Hence there appeared a whole series of literary productions — chants of purification (*καθαρμοί*), sacred legends (*ἱεροὶ λόγοι*), Orphic verses, mystic poems, religious epics — which were produced in great abundance under the names of Orpheus, Musæus, Linus, Epimenides, and Aristæus of Proconnesus. We need not study to-day all these little-known works. They belong rather to erudition than to the history of literature; yet the mention of them must not be omitted.

About the same time, probably at Delphi, was formed the legend of the Seven Sages: Thales, Pittacus, Bias, Solon, and others whose



names, as we have them, vary. From the beginning of the fifth century, these personages, so different from one another, were represented as a sort of fraternity meeting from time to time at Delphi or elsewhere, to exchange moral observations. To them was attributed a multitude of proverbs, maxims, and moral precepts, like the celebrated *Γνώθι σεαυτόν*, or the no less celebrated *Μηδὲν ἄγαν*. The legend, if taken literally, is evidently false; yet it contains this germ of truth: the beginning of the sixth century, to which it assigns the period of the Seven Sages, is distinguished from the preceding ages by a keener interest in the real world, and a disposition to observe and reflect, which was to become scientific and give rise to prose.

The legend of Æsop may well be connected with the preceding. He was the reputed author of short, familiar tales, allegorical and moral in character, in which animals played the leading parts. They are called fables to-day. He was said to have been a Phrygian slave, and the period of his life was referred to the time of Cræsus. Herodotus mentions him as already a well-known personage.<sup>1</sup> A prose version of his fables was, no doubt, then current at Athens. Whatever the origin of the fables, the only point to be noted here is that Greek tradition, while making the legendary Æsop contemporary with Cræsus, expressed in its own way the relation it had observed between these familiar moral allegories and the age when prose first began to appear.

**3. Hesitation between Prose and Poetry.** — Although prose was the method of expression most in harmony with the new form of Greek thinking, and though this harmony had been felt from the beginning, there was at first some hesitation to use it. Important philosophic works were written in verse; and even in history, this confusion of the two types is not without examples. Moreover, as the first prose-writers had to create everything, there was uncertainty about the formation of the new style. In general, these old writers wished to write as they spoke, with great simplicity, more regardful of truth than of literary beauty. But involuntarily poetic reminiscences would force themselves into their language. Perfect simplicity is not the quality of an amateur. Besides, some few had a confused idea that prose also is capable of beauty. Not knowing, however, where to look for the elements of that beauty, they sought them in imitation of poetic language. Had they wished to do otherwise, they would not have been able; for what constitutes the beauty of elegant prose is the very perfection of those qualities of logic and analysis which give rise to prose at all. At that time analysis and

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, II. 134.

logic were rudimentary even in the greatest minds. Ideas were placed side by side without connection, and each was expressed in a summary manner. The sentences were short, and the movement of the style somewhat childish. The first five hundred years of Greek prose is a period of beginnings, or rather of gropings.

One of the most ancient monuments of Greek prose was a work by Pherecydes of Syros, with a bizarre, obscure title, *Ἐπτάμυχος* (something like *The Cave with the Seven Recesses*).<sup>1</sup> It was a sort of mystic theogony. There are extant a number of phrases, several of which have been discovered recently. They show very clearly the characteristics we have just been discussing. The work began thus: Ζῆς μὲν καὶ Χρόνος ἔσαν καὶ Χθονίη. Χθονίη δὲ οὖνομα ἐγένετο Γῆ, ἐπειδὴ Ζῆς γέρας διδοῖ.<sup>2</sup> The style, accordingly, recalls Hesiod rather than Plato.

We come now to philosophers and historians proper, who were the real founders of prose.

**4. The Philosophic Doctrines.** — We need not study here the history of old Greek philosophy. A few words on the subject will suffice for the understanding of the literary events that correspond to this movement of ideas.

Greek philosophy was born on that day when some thinker tried to find a rational, systematic explanation of the universe. The honor of this initiative was attributed by the Greeks to Thales of Miletus, who lived in the beginning of the sixth century. Initiated, it is said, into the astronomical lore of the Chaldæans, he did not stop with predicting eclipses or explaining meteorologic phenomena. He had the majestic conception that all existing things had a common origin, and that water was the primordial matter of the universe. And after him, other Ionians, such as Anaximander and Anaximenes, though holding to the idea of a primitive substance, conceived it differently. For Anaximander, it was the "unlimited" (*ἄπειρον*), from which things separated themselves and were distinguished. First came water, and that engendered the earliest living beings. For Anaximenes, it was air, that, by rarefaction, produced fire, and by condensation, water and land. Anaximander was, like Thales, a sage. To him was attributed the construction of a gnomon for astronomical observations, and that of the first map made in Greece.<sup>3</sup> Heraclitus, the

<sup>1</sup> [This name is given also in the form *Πεντέμυχος*, — *Cave with the Five Recesses*. Cf. the articles by H. Diels in *Sitzungsbericht d. Berl. Akad. d. Wissenschaften* for 1897, pp. 144–156; and by L. Preller in *Rh. M.* for 1846, pp. 377 ff. The title *Ἐπτάμυχος* doubtless comes from Suidas, s.v. *Φερεκύδης Βάβυος Σόριος*; but, as Preller shows, the work was probably named from the five elemental principles, — ether, fire, air, water, and earth. — Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> "There existed Zeus and Chronos and Chthonia. But Chthonia came to be called Ge when Zeus bestowed honor upon her." <sup>3</sup> Strabo, I, 11.

latest of the Ionians in date, conceived of fire as the beginning of things, the principle of movement and life, which incessantly transforms the appearance of all things. "Everything flows" (πάντα ῥεῖ), said he, and the origin of being is an infinite mobility. The theory of Heraclitus was both the final result of Ionic natural philosophy, and a reply to the Eleatic doctrines.

While the Ionians were constructing their systems, other thinkers, incited probably by the example of Thales, devoted themselves to similar researches, only along quite other lines.

17 The first of these was Pythagoras, who about the middle of the sixth century was the founder of a system of morals, the originator of a type of ascetic life, and as well the creator of a system of metaphysic. As a great mathematician and a reformer of musical theory, he found the principle of everything in harmony and in number, without which formless, inert matter could not rise to the scale of being. Then Xenophanes of Colophon, first poet and then philosopher, succeeded Pythagoras; for he names him in his verses as a personage already celebrated. In the second half of the sixth century he proclaimed that the sensible world is a mere vain appearance, that the invisible essence of things is found in Unity; and that the only true existence is Being, one and unchangeable. After him, Parmenides of Elea, his disciple, took up his thesis, and defended it with indefatigable logic.

Then there appeared, on the one hand, conciliators like Empedocles; and on the other, men who tried to advance farther along the lines already laid down. Empedocles, born at Agrigentum in the first quarter of the fifth century, tried to combine the doctrines of his predecessors. He composed the total Unity by the aid of the four elements of the Ionians, through a series of actions and reactions, Love and Hate. This theory cannot fail to recall Heraclitus's favorite theory of motion. About the same time, Leucippus founded the atomic doctrine, which was destined to so long a life. Finally Anaxagoras, who was born at Clazomenæ in the beginning of the fifth century, but whose philosophic activity seems to have been later than that of Empedocles and Leucippus, attributed the origin of things to uncreated elements, infinite in number and smallness, confused at first in a sort of chaos, but later distinguished and organized by a principle of life which he called Mind (Νοῦς). It is the first appearance of Intelligence as an active element in a philosophic system, as a source of organization and life. Diogenes of Apollonia, who, after Anaxagoras, developed the ideas of Anaximenes, seemed no doubt a little tardy; for his reputation was never as great as that of his illustrious contemporaries.

After all these experiments, which were productive rather of pretty hypotheses than of rigorous demonstrations, came a period of scepticism. To tear down these imposing, fragile constructions was the work of the sophists. We shall return later to these thinkers; for their entrance on the scene opens a new period in the history of Greek thought.

**5. The Art of Writing among Philosophic Prose-writers.**—Neither Thales, Pythagoras, nor Leucippus wrote anything. If their doctrines left any permanent traces, it is because they were collected by disciples who transmitted them to posterity. As for the philosophers who left written works behind, those who wrote in prose have been most neglected, so that it is difficult to judge of their talent by a knowledge of the facts. The usual title of their works seems to have been: *Περὶ φύσιος*, *On Nature*, or more exactly, *On the Origin of Things*. We have now only the débris of these works and most of the fragments are of tantalizing brevity.

In certain phrases of Anaximander, however, one can feel a sort of religious and poetic grandeur. Of Anaximenes, there remains absolutely nothing. Diogenes Laertius, indeed, praises the simplicity of his pure Ionic style; but we are obliged to accept the opinion of Diogenes in the matter.

Heraclitus is better known, owing both to the number of his fragments and to his strong originality, which is manifest even in the simplest words. He was called "the Obscure" (ὁ σκοτεινός); and the ancients particularly criticised the defects of his style. But their judgment was formed in comparison with the ideal of elegance and clearness created by the rhetoric of a later time. We rather admire his qualities; for, though not conforming to rhetorical rules, they are of a superior order. His obscurity is not so great as has sometimes been thought, and does not come so much from the words themselves, or from faulty phraseology, as from the extraordinary novelty of his ideas, from the unexpected, quick surprises by which he brusquely connected contrary ideas in the effort to unite them by a never ending evolution into a solid whole. He neither analyzes his ideas nor takes care to make them acceptable by showing their interrelations. On the contrary, he takes pleasure in forcing them violently together, with a vivid imagination and a sort of passion that animates all his work. Therefore his phrases seem strange at first, but sink deep, penetrate, and take fast hold. "The only wisdom is to know the Thought that, through all things, governs all: this wishes and does not wish to be named Zeus."<sup>1</sup> In other words, the name is of little significance, if only one does not

<sup>1</sup> Frs. 12 and 55, Mullach. These go together.



conceive it as does the common multitude. Or again, "The gods are mortal and men immortal: the death of the former is the life of the latter."<sup>1</sup> In other words, man is of the same substance as God; but in man, this substance is in a state less subtile, less aflame: a man is, so to speak, a god dying. Similarly, "The driest soul is the wisest one."<sup>2</sup> Heraclitus, however, is not always obscure: he has maxims whose style is clear and energetic:—

"To offer prayers to statues is to speak to dwelling-houses without knowing what gods and heroes really are."<sup>3</sup>

"The wisest man is but a jackanapes beside the gods."<sup>4</sup>

What he lacks is the gift of art, the power to invest aright his wealth and obtain its full value. But he possesses the essential riches, and these nothing can replace.

Of Anaxagoras (beginning of the fifth century) we have seventeen fragments, one almost a page in length. Diogenes Laertius says of one of them that it contains charm and grandeur. Its charm comes principally from the use of the Ionic dialect; while its grandeur lies in the thought itself. The writer's personality seems as fully absent from his works as from a treatise on geometry. There is neither passion nor imagination, if one considers the details of its language. He never discusses, but simply, like an oracle, announces truths as certainties. So his contemporaries jestingly called him Intelligence.<sup>5</sup> The epigram is just, and indicates well the lofty, clear, formal character of his style.

Diogenes of Apollonia, though inferior in thought, has more technical power than his predecessors, more of that supple dialectic which can express ideas cleverly and is an essential element of prose. Though a Dorian by birth, he employed Ionic, as this was the dialect of philosophic prose; and he used it with really graceful simplicity. What is more, he had caught its spirit; for the first lines of his work call the attention of the reader to the novel character of his style. "Methinks that in the beginning of every discourse it is well to state a definite principle, in simple, serious language."

**6. The Art of Writing among Philosophic Poets.**—Whereas prose was still in almost a stage of prattling, poetry had had a long and glorious career. It could say everything, and that with elegance and power. Hence the philosophers who wrote in verse were much more adept in the expression of philosophic ideas than their rivals, the prose-writers; and certain of the qualities properly belonging to

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Plutarch, *Pericles*, 4.

good prose, to say nothing of those properly belonging to poetry, are found well exemplified in their poems. Xenophanes, before becoming a philosopher, apparently was a poet. He was born at Colophon in the very beginning of the sixth century; and it is only in the latter part of his life, it seems, that he published his philosophical poem. He is said to have been attracted to these new studies owing to the renown of those who had just inaugurated them. His long life of nearly a century was largely spent elsewhere than at Colophon. He left his native state early, travelled over Occidental Greece, and after the foundation of Elea by the Phocians (about 544) doubtless fixed his residence there; for in that place his doctrine led to the foundation of a school: and besides, he told of the founding of the city in an epic poem.

He composed elegies also. There are extant some fine fragments, in which wisdom is combined with passion. Their form is elegant. He says of the nobles of Colophon:—

“They go to the agora all dressed in purple, numbering more than a thousand men. They are full of pride—pride in their splendid heads of hair; and are steeped in fine perfumes.”<sup>1</sup>

The athletes, so loved and admired in Greece at this time, did not inspire more sympathy in him than did the fastidious nobles. He despised their art, and said proudly:—

“Better than the strength of men and the swiftness of horses is our wisdom.”<sup>2</sup>

In these last words it is a philosopher that is speaking. In another passage, it is merely an amiable moralist, who reminds one of Solon:—

“See how the floor of the room has been cleaned. The hands of all the guests are white, and the bowls shine. A man adorns the guests with crowns, and another offers them in a cup a pleasing perfume. The mixing bowl, source of joy, is being adorned. The wine is ready in earthen vessels, abundant, sweet, and perfumed. Incense fills the air with its sweet odors. The water is fresh, sweet, and pure. White bread is served. The table is loaded with cheese and honey. The central altar is covered with flowers. The whole dwelling resounds with songs and gayety. First, wise men will sing of the divinity with pious and pure words, pouring libations and asking that they may act justly. This, my friends, is better than revelling. We must so drink that, if age have not enfeebled us, we may regain our dwelling without a slave’s assistance.”<sup>3</sup>

The philosophic fragments are in hexameter, and seem to have belonged to a single poem, possibly entitled, like the Ionic writings,

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. 21.

Περὶ φύσιος. They are not numerous, and comprise about thirty verses. Some treat the illusions of men who take sensible appearance for reality. Others relate to the qualities of the one, unchangeable Being. Among the errors of men, the one which particularly excited his indignation was the idea, absurd, as he says, that they had formed of the gods. The theology of Homer and of the traditional religion, the anthropomorphism of all Greece, inspired in him the same scorn as in the *Polyeucte* of Corneille: —

“Every crime is ascribed to the gods by Homer and Hesiod. All that, among mortals, is worthy of blame and reprobation, all shameful actions, are praised in their chants: thefts, adulteries, and mutual deceptions.”<sup>1</sup>

“If oxen and lions had hands, if they could design as men do, they would make gods just like themselves: horses would represent them as horses; oxen as oxen, with a figure and members similar to their own.”<sup>2</sup>

‡ Parmenides of Elea, who flourished in the first quarter of the fifth century, seems to have written only a single poem, perhaps also entitled Περὶ φύσιος. In a happy prelude, fortunately preserved, he tells how the docile coursers who conduct his thought where he wishes had carried it away in their swift chariot, guided by the daughters of the Sun, even to the portals of Day and Night; these, opening at the voice of the Heliades, had given them access to the presence of Truth. At this point the first part of the poem begins; it is dedicated to “truth” (τὰ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν), a rational knowledge of the one, unchangeable, eternal Being. A second part treats of “opinion,” the merely plausible theories constructed from the sensible appearance of things. This part, however, is extremely mutilated. The first, though much damaged, presents a sufficient number of consecutive passages so that one can still observe the rare mixture of dialectic vigor, firm conviction, and intellectual passion, which constituted his originality and striking merit.

“How wouldst thou have Being born? In what manner? From what origin? Whence would come to it its growth? From Non-Being? I forbid you to say or think this. One cannot say or think that Being does not exist. And what necessity has caused it to be? Why earlier, or later? There is in Being neither birth nor beginning: absolutely, it is or it is not, and no force of argument will ever prove that anything is produced from it which is not itself. That it could be born or die, is something which Justice will not suffer. She will not loosen the cords by which she keeps it bound.”

Such language was then a rare novelty. Zeno and Melissus, who succeeded Parmenides in the Eleatic school, were above all dispu-

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 6.

tants, the first masters of eristic. One may say that Parmenides, although a true poet in many ways, was quite worthy of having such disciples.

Empedocles, like Xenophanes, composed various works. Born at Agrigentum in Sicily, in the first quarter of the fifth century, he belonged to a rich and illustrious family. He is said to have refused a royal crown. His interest was universal. He knew all the systems of his predecessors. He was an engineer, a physician, a mystic, and, as it appears, something of a charlatan. His own verses represent him as surrounded by a bizarre crowd, to whom he promised recovery from all their ills, and gave himself out to be a god.<sup>1</sup> Such a personage tended to become legendary; a thousand strange adventures were attributed to him. His death was reported in various ways. The best-known tradition says that he perished in the crater of Ætna, into which he had thrown himself.<sup>2</sup> Aristotle informs us that Empedocles was then sixty years old.<sup>3</sup> He had written some expiatory hymns (*καθαρμοί*), a poem on medicine, some less important works, and a poem, *Περὶ φύσεως*, probably in three books. Of all his numerous verses, about four hundred and fifty have come down to us.

The terminology of his system, with the personifications which he styled Love and Discord, and his perfectly round Sphere which is the one and multiple, immobile and changing Being, is somewhat astonishing, and seems whimsical. But it could not alter the power of his spirit, the easy fulness of his exposition, or the brilliance of his style. We give an ingenious, picturesque fragment, that has not too abstruse an appearance:—

“When the painters, well instructed in their art, make a picture as an offering to some God, they take in their hands some variously colored substances, mix them harmoniously, using less of some and more of others; and with these they fashion images that reproduce the forms of living beings. They make trees, men and women, wild beasts, birds, fish living in the bosom of the deep, and gods of long life, covered with honors. So let not thy thought deceive thee into believing that elsewhere [than in the four elements] there is any other source of mortal beings, however numerous their species; but remember constantly this truth, which the divinity itself has caused thee to hear.”<sup>4</sup>

**7. The Logographers: General View.**—The first Greek historians are ordinarily called logographers<sup>5</sup> (*λογογράφοι* or *λογοποιοί*), “authors of prose narratives,” in opposition to the poets (*ἐποποιοί* or *μυθοποιοί*). Strabo, who could still read many of their old narratives, further

<sup>1</sup> vv. 397–413 and 462–470. Mullach.

<sup>4</sup> vv. 134–144.

<sup>2</sup> Diogenes Laertius, VIII, 69 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Thucydides, I, 21, 2.

<sup>3</sup> In Diogenes Laertius, *ibid.* 52 and 74.



informs us that, between these and those of the poets, there was little difference but that of metre; there was the same want of criticism, the same love of legend in both.<sup>1</sup> The subjects treated by the logographers were borrowed from the remotest past, the past most difficult to understand; namely, the foundations of cities (*κτίσεις*) and genealogies more or less mythical. The strange events mentioned in the old archives or preserved by oral tradition were their favorite material. There was no general view of the barbarian world, nor even of the Greek. They confined themselves to local chronicles. The narration took its course with simplicity, without philosophy or eloquence, yet not without grace. The logographers were mostly Ionians and wrote the dialect spoken in Ionia, with the natural ease which has been the privilege of their race.

Despite this general resemblance, there were certain differences. During the sixth and fifth centuries there was some progress in criticism, especially among those logographers who, not content with relating fabulous tales, were at the same time geographers, like Hecataeus of Miletus. These latter travelled; they learned to compare and reflect, and thereby added something to the sum total of the world's knowledge.

**8. Principal Writers of the Group.** — Some thirty names of logographers have been preserved, yet very few are known from fragments sufficiently interesting to deserve mention in the history of literature.

The oldest of whom there is any mention is Cadmus of Miletus, almost a contemporary of Pherecydes of Syros. To him was attributed a work, *On the Foundation of Miletus*, but the ancients themselves give us only vague information about him.

Acusilaus of the little city of Argos in Bœotia was somewhat younger. He is said to have lived in the second half of the sixth century. A work bearing his name was entitled *Genealogies*. It was in several books. He was a mythographer, or collector of local legends, and furnished some legends to Pindar. His *Genealogies* commenced with chaos, and continued through Gæa and Eros, as in Hesiod; then they passed to Phoroneus, the first man, and to the ancient human races that lived a thousand years; finally they reached the race of heroes. Sometimes legends would form short romances, such as that of *The Abduction of Orithyia by Boreas*. All this is evidently far from history proper.

We must mention here the Carian Scylax, born at Caryanda. He is not properly a logographer, but contributed to geographical knowledge. An admiral in the service of Darius, he was commissioned

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, I. p. 18.

by the latter to explore the coasts of the Indian Ocean. Aristotle still read his *Voyage*. Its observations were based upon the physical geography and manners of the countries he visited.<sup>1</sup> His work, however, was lost at an early date. About the middle of the fourth century a new *Voyage*, likewise passing under his name, obscured the fame of the authentic work, because that was too antique.

The greatest personage of the period is Hecataeus of Miletus, who was both historian and geographer. He was born about 540, and belonged to an illustrious family. The first part of his life was occupied with extensive travels in Europe, Asia, and Egypt. About 500, when the Ionians were preparing to revolt against Persia, rich with experience as a traveller, having seen the extent and power of the Persian Empire, he counselled his fellow-citizens to remain at peace.<sup>2</sup> He was unheeded. After the first reverses of the rebels, he tried to persuade them to seize the island of Leros, and make it the starting-point of their resistance.<sup>3</sup> He was no more successful than before; and the disaster of Lade was the result of their refusal to take his advice. After the final defeat, he obtained from the satrap, Artaphernes, a modification of the conditions at first imposed by the conqueror.<sup>4</sup> Suidas declares that he was still alive after the Persian Wars. All his conduct had been that of a firm, judicious thinker, exempt from illusion and unsteadiness. He composed two great works — the *Genealogies* and a *Description of the Earth*.

The *Genealogies*, beginning with Deucalion, related the history of the great mythic families to which the Greeks assigned the events of the remotest past. In them figure Hellen and his sons, Heracles and the Heraclidæ, then foreign heroes, Ægyptus, Cadmus, Danaus, etc. We are, accordingly, dealing with fable; the author was following the example of his predecessors. Yet he had the idea that some criticism was necessary. His work commenced with these words: "Hecataeus of Miletus speaks as follows: 'I write these things as they seem true to me; for the accounts of the Greeks are many, and as I think, ridiculous.'" In what, then, did his criticism consist? First of all, apparently, in a superficial rationalism that he brought to the interpretation of the myths; then, in the natural good sense which made him choose, among several conflicting traditions, the most plausible, the one best harmonizing with known facts.

His *Description of the Earth*, due to his own researches, independent of all imitation, was evidently of much greater scientific interest. It comprised two books, entitled *Europe* and *Asia*. The work was perhaps accompanied by a map, the second to be made in Greece (the

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, c. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus, II, 143.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* V, 125.

<sup>4</sup> Diodorus, X, 25, 2.

first being that of Anaximander<sup>1</sup>). Certain Alexandrian critics doubted the authenticity of part of the work that had come down to them under his name; but a minute examination of the passages borrowed from him by Herodotus shows that these doubts were not well founded. The scientific importance of this *Description of the Earth* was considerable. Although, of the three hundred fragments, or thereabout, still remaining, several often refer to a single proper name, we can still discern the extent of the author's knowledge and his influence over his successors. Not only was he the father of Greek geography, but he stood for something also in the creation of history, as Herodotus understood the term. The latter, possibly, without his example, would not have made all the journeys from which are reported so many facts, stories, and fables, that are documents in turn.

As a writer, Hecataeus is praised by Hermogenes for his purity of language, his clearness, and sometimes for his grace. The author of the *Treatise on the Sublime* gives us another interesting detail: it is that Hecataeus (probably in his *Genealogies*) took delight in making his characters speak in direct language; and he cites a few lines of a discourse of Ceyx to the Heraclidæ. As one would expect, it is not oratory, but is much more like the speeches of epic poetry. It is interesting, however, to see chronicles becoming animated and speech appearing in historic narrative, where it was later to have so great a place. After Hecataeus, it will be sufficient to mention hastily three other logographers, who seem to have lived somewhat before Herodotus: Pherecydes of Leros, author of *Genealogies* in the manner of Hecataeus; Charon of Lampsacus, who composed various writings, including the *Annals of Lampsacus* (Ἔροι Λαμψακηνῶν), of which we have a few interesting fragments; and Xanthus of Lydia, whose *Lydian Tales* (Λυδιακά), if we may believe Ephorus, were of much use to Herodotus. The notices of the ancients and the fragments show that all these writers had nearly the same method and the same excellences and defects: a simple, easy style, grace in narration, and often the air of popular story or of brief romance. They abounded in information, and used but little criticism, though they showed some progress in reflection.

We come now to the epoch of Herodotus, when there appeared two more logographers worthy of mention. The first was Hellanicus of Mitylene, cited by Thucydides for his *Attic History* (Ἀττικὴ ἐγγράφη).<sup>2</sup> It was his most important work. He began the history of Athens, no doubt, with the city's origins, and brought it down to contemporary events. He made mention of the battle of Arginusæ:

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, I, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Thucydides, I, 97.

(406). Thucydides mentions him in connection with the part of his work which deals with the interval between the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars, reproaching him with a lack of chronological precision. Whatever foundation there may be for the reproach, he made an interesting innovation in extending the domain of history into contemporary events. He was reputed author of a considerable number of special treatises on subjects taken from mythology, local history, and geography; and of lists of priestesses, victors in the games, etc. We know nothing of his style. Nor is Antiochus of Syracuse any better known. He composed a work, *On Italy*, and another, *On Sicily* (Σικελιώτις συγγραφή). In the first, he related the foundation of the principal Italian cities, and notably that of Rome. It was perhaps the first time that Rome figured in the work of a Greek historian. His work, *On Sicily*, began with its origins and came down to the year 424. We have almost nothing of these works; what principally commends him to our notice is that he had the honor of serving Thucydides as the principal source for the first chapters of his sixth book, relating to the different peoples of Sicily. This is the best eulogy that one can pronounce on his merit as a historian.

The names of Thucydides and Herodotus, which we have heard several times in connection with these last-mentioned logographers, shows that we are coming to the age of the first masterpieces of history. But before beginning a study of them, we must go back a little, to follow the development of the drama, the greatest literary creation of the fifth century.



## CHAPTER X

### ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF TRAGEDY<sup>1</sup>

1. The Cult of Dionysus in the Seventh and Sixth Centuries. Its Two Essential Characteristics: (a) Strong Sentiment; Lamentation and Rejoicing; (b) Mimic Character of the Dionysiac Festival. The Cult of the Heroes.
2. The Dithyramb and "Tragic" Songs in the North of the Peloponnesus.
3. Thespis. Creation of Primitive Tragedy. Institution of Tragic Contests at Athens.
4. Successors of Thespis: Chœrilus and Phrynichus.
5. The Satyr-Drama: Pratinas.
6. Nature of Tragic Contests in the Fifth Century.
7. Structure of Tragedy: Its Parts.
8. Progress of the Action. The Tragic Unities.
9. The Personages and the Chorus.

**1. The Cult of Dionysus in the Seventh and Sixth Centuries. Its Two Essential Characteristics: (a) Strong Sentiment; Lamentation and Rejoicing; (b) Mimic Character of the Dionysiac Festival. The Cult of the Heroes.**—In earlier chapters we have seen Greek lyric poetry developing, from the seventh century to the beginning of the fifth, in a remarkable variety of forms. We shall take up its history again a little later; for most of these forms were to be perpetuated from century to century, though more or less modified in character. But it is necessary for us first to pause and study, as its importance demands, the astonishing change which, during the sixth century, produced from certain of the lyric types the rich growth that is called, collectively, the drama.

The change was due principally to the great religious influence of the cult of Dionysus. Whatever the origin of the cult, it very early spread, with the culture of the vine, into a large number of the cantons of Greece. It was slowly amplified by foreign elements from Thrace, Lydia, and Phrygia; and shaped by philosophic and mystic ideas, under the influence of the religious movement called Orphism, or by contact with the Eleusinian Mysteries. Even the science of mythology cannot trace exactly the progress of this evolution. But literature is not directly interested in it. The only

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Ch. Magnin, *Origines du théâtre moderne*, I, Paris, 1838; F. C. Welcker, *Die griechischen Tragödien*, 3 vols., Bonn, 1839; Patin, *Études sur les tragiques grecques*, 4 vols., Paris, Hachette, 1841; J. Girard, *Le Sentiment religieux en Grèce*, III; Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Euripides Heracles*, vol. I, 1st ed., introduction; H. Weil, *Études sur le drame antique*; Donaldson, *Theatre of the Greeks*; Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, Oxford, 1896; Haigh, *The Attic Theatre*, Oxford, 1898.

thing in which it is really concerned is to understand the influence which the Dionysiac cult exercised on the formation of the drama.

The influence of this cult was due first to the exaltation of feeling accompanying it. Lyric poetry had indeed profoundly stirred men's hearts; but there was in it, even in the expression of enthusiasm or sorrow, a principle of harmony and hence of measure. The Dionysiac exaltation was much deeper and freer. In its popular form it was an intoxication, a sort of momentary delirium; and even in its higher stages, it was still a powerful excitation, which spread over one's whole being. This exaltation was varied like the cult itself and adapted to its different phases. The myth of Dionysus, in its essentials, represents the successive phenomena in the growth and culture of the vine; and like all myths having to do with the phenomena of nature, it is both joyous and sombre. The vine, which seemed dead in winter, after having been apparently mutilated in form, revived in spring, with a sort of exuberance; the young shoots appeared, grew rapidly, were covered with leaves, and finally the fruit developed. This endured the heat of summer, which seemed certain to dry it up; but the kindly rain helped it to swell. In the autumn, when ripe, it was gathered and pressed; its juice flowed in abundance and filled the vats. Grape-gathering was a period of noisy gayety. Then the new wine fermented, was drawn off, and put into a cask. In the spring, there was a new festival, no less joyous, when at the broaching of the cask people began to drink the wine of the year. All this, reduced to myth, becomes the story of a god who at times suffered and at times triumphed. There is place in his cult for the most opposing sentiments; and these break out in the traditional festival in boisterous demonstrations, and almost in violence. At certain times there are bursts of joy, laughter, masquerades — an overflowing of mirth as in a carnival; and these gave rise to comedy. At other times there are lamentations and dirges of mourning, in which were vaguely presented an image of human destiny forced through sorrowful vicissitudes by higher powers; and these gave rise to tragedy.

The Dionysiac cult, however, furnished the drama, not only with the sentiments it needed, but also with the law of its development, starting from a mimic instinct. Several Greek cults allowed more or less complete representation of certain parts of the myth relating to the gods that they celebrated. In a way, their actions and sufferings were represented, at least in elementary form; but no other cult could be compared in this respect with that of Dionysus. In the state of exaltation inseparable from it, the devotees readily identified themselves with their god or his habitual companions. In the

joy and delirium of intoxication, every sort of mimicry was admissible. Even in sadness, it was a pleasure to imagine things as present; and, the better to give this impression, men were disguised so as to resemble the personages about whose adventures they were singing. Choruses of men dressed in goatskins and calling themselves "goats" (τράγοι) represented the satyrs, turbulent companions of Bacchus. And these satyric choruses were the earliest form of tragedy.

But tragedy might never have been developed had not another cult, that of the heroes, sprung up in Greece at the same time as that of Dionysus. The epic heroes were in a sense the particular gods of cities and families. They were to grow more important as the groups of Greek people were organized, under aristocratic influence, more completely into states or cities. The heroes were protectors of these states, and the states were proud of the heroes. The lyric poetry of the seventh century, and particularly the works of Stesichorus, show what splendor their festivals then had in Sicily and Magna Græcia. They were held in equally high esteem in Greece proper. Herodotus speaks of a cult established by the city of Sicyon to the Argive hero Adrastus. This was in the time of the tyrant Cleisthenes, in the beginning of the sixth century. He tells us that the ceremonies of this cult stirred the passions of the people. The commemoration of heroes by stories sung about their deeds was already, in a fundamental sense, tragedy. The subjects were the same, and the emotions of the public did not differ very much from those felt later by the auditors of Æschylus. Both saw displayed before their imagination the spectacle of a heroic human race, in which they could see the play of their own passions and deepest feelings. Already, no doubt, the spectacle filled them with admiration, pity, terror, and sympathy, each in turn. This elementary tragedy wanted only the dramatic form, and we shall soon see how that want was satisfied.

2. The Dithyramb and "Tragic" Songs in the North of the Peloponnesus. — "Tragedy," says Aristotle, "was formed by those who led in chanting the dithyramb" (ἐκ τῶν ἐξαρχόντων τὸν διθύραμβον, Bekker, p. 1449 a). He adds, in the same phrase, that tragedy was at first improvised (αὐτοσχεδιαστική). This classical passage shows us, very briefly, a starting-point about which there can be no doubt. We have already seen the nature of the dithyramb, and how it became a literary type at Corinth after the end of the seventh century. But in speaking of improvisation, Aristotle seems to imply that it arose rather from the popular, than from the elegant, dithyramb. The precentor (ὁ ἐξάρχων) was a singer who probably developed his narra-

tive rather freely and in easy rhythm. The chorus, composed ordinarily of satyrs, answered him in passages that were committed to memory beforehand, though possibly mingling with them cries of pain. In default of evidence, we cannot form a clear idea of these chants. What Aristotle puts beyond doubt is the importance of the function devolving on the *ἐξάρχων*, and of the part left free for improvisation. The presence of satyrs is proved from another passage of the same author, very near the preceding one. Here he says expressly that tragedy was a transformation of the satyr-play (*διὰ τὸ ἐκ σατυρικοῦ μεταβαλεῖν, ibid.*).

Such improvisations were first given in the beginning of the sixth century, probably in several parts of Greece, but especially in the north of the Peloponnesus, around Sicyon and Corinth; for it is at Sicyon that the satyric form of the cult of Dionysus was most at home. One may, accordingly, consider this region of Greece, if not as the birthplace of tragedy, at least as the place where its destinies were shaped. The testimony of Herodotus, already quoted, shows in particular that the "tragic" songs which were in use there do not belong exclusively to Dionysus, but include also some local heroic legends. This explains why an ancient tradition, well worthy of notice, points out as the first author of tragedy a Sicyonian, Epigenus, who is represented as a predecessor of Thespis.<sup>1</sup> The name Epigenus in itself signifies little. The fact to be remembered is that, in the beginning of the sixth century, lyric poets of Sicyon were composing dithyrambs or tragic chants differing little from the forms of tragedy at Athens.

**3. Thespis. Creation of Primitive Tragedy. Institution of Tragic Contests at Athens.**<sup>2</sup> — Nevertheless it is in Attica that tragedy proper arose: and the man designated as its father, by the unanimous assent of antiquity, was Thespis.

Born about 580 in the deme of Icaria, in the neighborhood of the Isthmus, it can scarcely be doubted that he felt early and deeply the influence of the masters of Sicyon whom we have mentioned. A composer of rustic dithyrambs such as they, he must have written lyric works at first scarcely distinguishable from their own. But he was endowed with inventive genius, and did not hesitate to modify considerably the traditional forms of tragic chants and create something original.

His great invention was the introduction of an actor. The *ἐξάρχων* of the dithyramb apparently was simply leader of the chorus or

<sup>1</sup> Suidas, s.v. *Θέσπης*.

<sup>2</sup> The fragments of Thespis are merely vague titles of dramas. See Wagner, *Poetarum Tragicorum Fragmenta*, 3 vols., Ratisbon, 1846-1852.



coryphæus; he was too closely associated with the chorus to be able to play a distinct and really personal rôle. Thespis originated the idea of associating with the tragic chorus a reciter, who should not be part of it. There was already some dramatic fiction; for the chorus at Sicyon, as is seen from the fact that it was composed, in part at least, of satyrs, merely played a rôle. The reciter entered into this fiction, and was regarded as a personage participating in the action. His proper function was to converse with the chorus, most often, doubtless, replying to its questions by reciting verses. Hence the name "answerer"; for such seems really to have been the primitive sense of the word ὑποκριτής (actor). After that, the narrative element, necessarily limited in the dithyramb, became susceptible of extension and variety; it was possible to characterize the situation more clearly, and even to vary it. Thus action was developed; for the progress of the narrative element was really progress of the dramatic element. Dialogue appeared in the same process, at least in elementary form. The interlacing of songs with corresponding narratives was really dialogue. The plays attributed to Thespis are now known only by titles whose authenticity cannot be guaranteed. Such titles are *The Funeral Games of Pelias*, *The Priests*, *The Youths*, and *Pentheus*. In any event, it is beyond doubt that their subjects were freely borrowed from the whole body of heroic legends, and no longer simply from those of Dionysus.

When Thespis had thus transformed his dithyramb, did he eliminate from it the satyrs? Probably not, at least in the beginning, since the new type took, or kept, the name of tragedy (τραγῳδία, song of the τραῖνοι, men dressed in goatskins). Moreover, the costume was one of the attractions of this poetry. It was at first difficult to alter. But Thespis certainly tended to make the heroic part of his elementary drama superior to the satyric; and it is even probable that, once successful, he induced his public to accept tragedies without satyrs. The chorus, as found in classic tragedy, is nowhere described as a novelty of the fifth century; and it must have been commonly employed in the sixth century, at least in its second half.

Thus about 550 we see the tragic drama constituted, with an actor playing various rôles in turn (hero, messenger, servant), and a chorus no longer formed of satyrs. How and on what occasions were the plays of Thespis produced? Horace, evidently following the traditions of the Alexandrian schools, tells us that Thespis *went about with his plays on wagons* (A.P. 276). There is no reason to doubt his testimony. One has only to interpret it. Thespis probably represented his dramas in the demes of Attica at the festivals of Dionysus, and particularly the autumnal festival. Doubtless he was both actor and

manager. One can think of him as a stranger who arrived, some days before the festival, in the deme with which he had made his contract, bringing his apparatus with him on a large cart. There he formed a chorus, and gave it a summary training. Then, when the day arrived, he offered his production in the public square, perhaps using his chariot, decorated for the purpose, for certain pompous entrées. All this was of course rather simple, but it pleased by its novelty. His success seems to have been great and rapid. Tragedy thus won favor side by side with the dithyramb, for that still continued. If we may believe Plutarch, Solon, who died about 559, saw a tragedy in his extreme old age. Pisistratus saw fit to favor tragedy, that he might please the people. Regaining possession of his power in 539, after his second exile, he wished to make the Athenians forget their liberties by giving them fine festivals. According to the chronicles of Paros, which are in agreement with Suidas, Thespis won the prize in a dramatic contest between 536 and 534. This was probably the first tragic contest at Athens. One may assert that it formed part of one of the spring festivals of Dionysus in the city — probably the Lenæan festival, as embellished by Pisistratus.

So tragedy gained a footing in Athens which it was never to lose. Henceforth it became part of the yearly festival of the city to Dionysus, and shared its fortunes. And this was the occasion for certain improvements in representation. There was then no theatre. Tragedy, like the dithyramb, was played at Athens in the agora, where the people took their places on temporary seats. According to Horace, the actor, in the time of Thespis, stained his face with the lees of wine. Other witnesses speak of white lead, purslane, or cloth masks. There is no reason for disbelieving that an inventor like Thespis, in the course of a long life, modified and improved his material equipment several times. The contrary would be surprising. He must also have given his chorus and himself costumes befitting their rôles, that he might enhance the dramatic illusion. But he seems to have been easily content in this respect, for it is to Æschylus that the invention of the tragic costume proper is attributed. A contest presupposes rules and an organization. The number of competitors and the number of plays admitted to representation was necessarily limited from the beginning. We shall see that in the next century the competitors were three in number, and each presented four plays. The rule certainly was developed from the usage of the sixth century; but from one epoch to the other, many changes must have been made, and the succession of them has been lost.

**4. Successors of Thespis: Chœrilus and Phrynichus.**<sup>1</sup>—The very institution of a contest shows that, in the second half of the sixth century, the new type was cultivated simultaneously by a somewhat large number of poets—contemporaries or immediate successors of Thespis. Two only need be named here—Chœrilus and Phrynichus.

Chœrilus is known from evidences so uncertain and so conflicting that it is not worth while to pause and study him or his work. He seems to have lived after Thespis and before Æschylus; perhaps he belongs rather to the fifth century than to the sixth. There is nothing improbable in the testimony of those who attribute to him, vaguely however, certain improvements in costumes and masks. A versified proverb represents him as one of the masters of the satyr-drama; but there is nothing to prove that he preceded Pratinas, of whom we shall speak shortly.

Phrynichus has been less deeply plunged in oblivion, yet our knowledge of him is no better defined. According to Suidas, he was an Athenian, and victor in a dramatic contest of the sixty-seventh Olympiad (512–509). This is possibly the date of his first victory. We know from Plutarch that he won again in 476. The two dates determine approximately the period of his success. He preceded Æschylus a few years, and was the most brilliant tragic poet of Athens between 510 and 480. Suidas attributes to him the introduction of feminine characters; yet perhaps all he did was to perfect the masks and costumes. At any rate, with him tragedy seems to have gained much in brilliance, variety of sentiment, emotions, and even material equipment. Twice, at least, he tried to deal with contemporary subjects. About 495 he represented a recent historical incident, the *Capture of Miletus*. The play is said to have made the Athenians weep, though it excited their anger against the poet. Again, some twenty years later, probably in 476, he took as the subject of his *Phœnician Women* the defeat of Xerxes at Salamis, a subject which Æschylus, in turn, was to treat in the *Persians*. We know only about a dozen titles of his tragedies, and some fragments. Aristophanes several times praises the beauty of his lyric chants, a number of which were still popular at that time. It is probable that the lyric element was predominant in his plays. It remained for Æschylus to bring to its full value the dramatic element.

**5. The Satyr-Drama: Pratinas.**<sup>2</sup>—In the hands of these various poets, tragedy was more and more divested of the elements foreign

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the foot-note, p. 167. See also Nauck, *Tragicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, 1st ed., Leipzig, 1856.

<sup>2</sup> Consult: The works of Wagner and Nauck, *sup. cit.*; also Welcker, *Abhandlung über das Satyrspiel*, Frankfurt, 1826, in *Nachtrag zur æschylischen*

to its nature — particularly the satyrs. In the beginning of the fifth century these were definitely debarred from its choruses. But at the same time they reappeared in the theatre in a kindred composition, to which they gave their name.

Our information as to the origin of the satyr-drama is confused and untrustworthy. We hear that the people loved the satyrs; that when deprived of them, they clamored for them in the name of religion, declaring that there was no longer anything for Dionysus in tragedy (οὐδὲν πρὸς Διόνυσον); and that the satyric type was created to satisfy their demands. The historic truth contained in the tale can be gleaned only by conjecture.

It is probable that the transformation wrought in the dithyramb by Thespis had its influence in the neighboring states. The masters of Sicily, after having given him lessons, received some from him, and began, in the second half of the sixth century, likewise to write tragedies. Yet they wrote them in the manner of Sicily. Instead of eliminating the satyrs, who were really indigenous there, they assigned to them the functions of the chorus; and so, by the side of Attic tragedy, which had no satyrs, there arose a Peloponnesian tragedy, imitated from the preceding, but provided with satyrs. The latter was taken to Athens about 500 by a poet of Phlius, named Pratinas. We know nothing more about him, except that he competed at Athens against Æschylus and Chœrilus in the seventieth Olympiad (500–497), and that he was the first to write satyric drama (καὶ πρῶτος ἔγραψε σατύρους, Suidas). It is probable that about 500, Pratinas merely took part in a dramatic contest at Athens with a satyr-play, which he presented as an ordinary tragedy. His success restored the satyrs to favor; yet the Athenians were not willing to renounce their own purely heroic tragedy. They preferred to associate the two types, and soon the association was prescribed by law; the poets who took part in a dramatic contest were to present three ordinary tragedies and a satyr-drama. Pratinas continued to be the master of the type while he lived, and bequeathed the honor to his son Aristias. After him, all the great Athenian tragic poets composed satyr-dramas.

This drama is, then, only a special form of tragedy, more akin to the primitive type. It preserved, together with the rôle of the satyrs, its fantasy, its laughter mingled with lamentation, and its licentious witticisms. Its structure does not differ essentially from that of classic tragedy; but it is, so to speak, a provincial tragedy, arrested in development, — the tragedy of Sicily in the sixth cen-



tury, slightly Atticized, — still bearing the imprint of its time and origin. Relegated by the Athenians to a secondary rank, it remained shorter than tragedy proper; for it seems to have been content to the last with two actors. But its subjects are taken from the same legends, and its personages belong to the same race of gods and heroes. The great difference is that it possesses a merrier humor. In the words of Demetrius of Phaleron, it is a “gay tragedy,” *παίζουσα τραγῳδία*. Adventures both terrible and comical constituted its material. The personages were now bold and now ludicrous. Monsters were not excluded. But the action always turned out happily. A certain coarseness was admissible, owing to the character of the satyrs; yet the coarseness had its limits, and could never be displayed broadly as in comedy. It was really a composite drama, capable of amusing inventions, but presenting great difficulties. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides succeeded with it as with tragedy. However, the satyric type seems never to have risen to the same degree of respect.

**6. Nature of Tragic Contests in the Fifth Century.**<sup>1</sup> — The introduction of satyr-drama into the tragic contest at the beginning of the fifth century completed the system of representing tragedy. From this time on the representation, no doubt, was several times essentially modified, and we shall note some of the modifications later. But before studying the great poets who introduced them, it is indispensable to get certain general notions about the manner in which their plays were represented at Athens, and about the normal structure of a tragedy.

In Greece, tragedy was one of the ceremonies of the state religion. Springing from the rites of the Dionysiac cult, it remained, throughout the whole classic period, a tribute of homage rendered by the city to one of its divinities.

The first consequence of this fact is that tragedy was not played, as with us, at any time whatever, nor even frequently. It was as closely connected with the cult of Dionysus as certain offices with us are with stated festivals. This does not mean that it formed a necessary part of every Dionysiac festival. Usage seems to have reserved it, in Attica at least, for the Dionysia of the Fields (*τὰ Διονύσια τὰ κατ' ἀγρούς*), the Lenæa, and the Dionysia of the City or Great Dionysia (*τὰ ἐν ἄστυι*). But the Dionysia of the Fields was

<sup>1</sup> Consult: A. Müller, *Griechische Bühnenaltertümer*, Freiburg, 1886; Haigh, *The Attic Theatre*, Oxford, 1898; Oenichen, *Das Bühnenwesen der Griechen und Römer*, in vol. V of Iwan Müller's *Handbuch*; O. Navarre, *Dionysos*, Paris, 1895; Dörpfeld und Reisch, *Das griechische Theater*, Athens, 1896; Bethe, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters im Altertum*, Leipsic, 1896.

a modest rustic festival celebrated by the demes; the Lenæa were particularly joyous, and so suitable for comedy. Accordingly the great tragic representations were at the time of the City Dionysia, which took place in spring in the month of Elaphebolion (March-April). This was the time, in the days of the city's glory, when the allied states came to the Piræus, bringing their tribute and their merchandise. It was then that new tragedies were represented.

The task of organizing the contest for this festival was vested in the *Archon Eponymus*. The poets went to him to obtain a chorus, that is, for the privilege of having their plays brought out. The archon chose three of them at his pleasure, probably those who seemed best able to please the people; and it was between these that the contest took place. Each of them was to present three tragedies and a satyr-drama. We shall later study this grouping when we take up Æschylus. The plays thus chosen were in a way lent to the state by the poet in return for a remuneration, which constituted his salary.

The tragedies were turned over by the archon to the charge of choregi. The tragic choregia at Athens was a contribution imposed on the richer citizens, each in his turn. The three choregi were nominated by the tribes for each contest of the Great Dionysia, and had to organize the choruses and pay for their training and equipment; all the expenses were at their cost. The chorus of each tragedy seems to have consisted of twelve persons in the time of Æschylus, and fifteen in the time of Sophocles and afterward. In the beginning, the poet himself taught the choreutes; and by reason of these functions, he received the title of chorus-trainer (*χοροδιδάσκαλος*). Later the task was ordinarily assigned to professional men who made it their business. In addition, the chorus had a leader named coryphæus, who, during the representation, directed it and in certain cases spoke in its name. The choreutes, like the actors, had costumes and wore masks, but their equipage was less pompous and cumbersome; for they represented, in general, common people; and besides, being obliged to perform evolutions in cadence and even to dance, they could not be burdened nor encumbered.

The actors were recruited and paid by the state. In primitive times, the poets played the principal rôles of their dramas. This certainly was true of Thespis and his immediate successors. Æschylus was an actor, at least for the greater part of his life; but Sophocles played only in his youth. Then the usage disappeared. Mimic art, becoming more difficult, needed specialists. Toward the middle of the fifth century there were no longer any but professional actors. Thespis, as we have seen, introduced the first actor. Æschylus

introduced a second. Sophocles, even in his youth, was permitted to bring on the third, an innovation by which Æschylus, too, profited toward the close of his life. The number three was never exceeded. The three actors shared the different parts, each of them being able, of course, to play several. In exceptional cases, if a fourth personage was absolutely necessary to pronounce some few words, recourse was had to a supply actor. He was called a *parachoregema* (παραχορήγημα), probably because he constituted an extra expense at the charge of the choregus. The three regular actors were not equal one to the other, but were distinguished as first (πρωταγωνιστής), second (δευτεραγωνιστής), and third (τριταγωνιστής). We shall have occasion to point out later what value was attached to the distinction by each of the tragic poets. In general, it depended on the importance of the parts; and it always exercised a considerable influence on the internal constitution of the plays. For Athenian customs did not permit women to appear on the scene, and the actors had to play both male and female parts.

Coming now to the representation itself, we shall try to show how it was performed.

From the end of the sixth century, probably, tragedies were played in a theatre; but the word seems to have been applied successively to very diverse objects, about which our information is very imperfect.

A theatre (θέατρον) is properly the place where one can see (θεᾶσθαι), that is, where one sits and looks on at a spectacle. In the beginning, a public square, or an open space near a temple of Dionysus, was sufficient, especially if the natural slope of the ground were suitable. Later, wooden seats were erected; and still later, they were built in stone. We cannot enter here into the details of this obscure development. We may say simply that, in the time of Æschylus, and even in that of Sophocles and Euripides, the material equipment of the theatre was still quite simple. The great stone edifices date only from the next century. In the fifth century, tragedies were played at the Great Dionysia, near the temple of Dionysus Eleuthereus to the south of the Acropolis.

An amphitheatre of seats, chiselled or built in the rock, covered the slope of the hill. About twenty thousand spectators could be accommodated. At the base of the seats was a circular space, carefully levelled, or even paved with flagstones, forming a dancing-place or orchestra. In the middle stood an altar. The orchestra was the regular place for the evolutions of the chorus. Two entrances (πάροδοι), one at the left of the spectators and the other at the right, served for ingress and egress. According to the

demands and exigencies of the drama, the chorus moved in ranks or in files, crossed the orchestra, and its members grouped themselves about the altar, or advanced up to the "scene" — of which we shall speak further. At times, it marched with rhythmic step as it sang to the accompaniment of a flute-player; and at times it danced. The tragic dance *par excellence* was the slow and serious ἐμμέλεια, which was quite different from the tumultuous dance of comedy. Sometimes the chorus stood still. It was the primitive element of tragedy. Although its importance constantly decreased, one may say that, during the whole of the fifth century, it contributed much, by the splendor of its costumes, the grace of its movements, and the beauty of its chants, to the dramatic effect.

At the back of the orchestra, facing the spectators, rose the scene (σκηνή). This was the name reserved for the building where the actors and operators were — or more specially, the façade of the building toward the seats. However simple at the beginning, its construction assumed real beauty in the course of the fifth century, even when it consisted of a merely temporary framework. The front façade was adorned, from the time of Æschylus, with a movable ornamentation that received the name of *proscenium* (προσκήνιον). The art of the decorators perfected it from time to time. It was composed of painted canvas and wooden panels, arranged in different designs. Often the central decoration was a palace, and this was finally the prevailing one, becoming almost regular in the next century. The façade must have been enclosed, at an indefinite date, by wings (παρασκήνια); we have no good information on the subject. Behind the façade were concealed various machines, such as those used to imitate the distant rumblings of thunder, or those adapted to make possible the appearance of the gods in mid-air above the *proscenium*. The most remarkable, though least well understood, seems to have been the *eccyclema*, a rolling platform, which advanced in front of the scene, and was used to remove the panels when the public was to see the interior of a temple or palace.

Ordinarily the actors remained in front of the scene. Were they, as was long believed, and as they were in the Roman period, on a stage dominating the orchestra? Recent investigations would show the contrary. The study of tragedy in the fifth century would be full of difficulties, if the actors had been separated from the chorus by any considerable difference of elevation. In fact, very often they entered from the orchestra, sometimes even riding on chariots, and accompanied by a procession of attendants. They crossed the orchestra, at all events. The chorus, too, went in a body, if necessary, as far as the door of the palace, or as far as the ornamentations



of the scene. Sometimes, as in the *Prometheus* or the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, the chorus entered from the middle of this ornamentation. But it is beyond doubt that, in the course of the play, the actors generally stood opposite the decorations of the scene, while the chorus was grouped together, preferably some distance from there, in the orchestra. When the scene represented a palace, a temple raised above some steps, or possibly a mound, it might happen that the principal actor, and afterward some of the other actors, would come accidentally to be on a higher level, which would bring them into view better. But this no doubt was the exception. We do not find in the language of the time a single word to designate a stage; that of *λογεῖον* (in Latin, *pulpitum*) did not appear till later.

The tragic actors always covered their faces with masks. The usage is probably religious in origin, and goes back to the very beginnings of tragedy. In rare cases the mask could be changed when the actor left the scene; however, it was expected to remain the same during long dialogues. Hence it was impossible to give it a temporary expression. It could only indicate, simply and strikingly, the general character of the rôle, marking principally the age and sex of the personage, and his condition and dominant sentiment. This arrangement was adapted to a very large theatre. However, as the mask showed the eyes and mouth, the actor still had at his disposal certain changes of feature. But his resources were principally in the chants, the declamation, the attitudes, and the gestures. We have testimony that, with these limited means, the great actors of the fifth century obtained powerful effects. Their art grew in importance until finally it imposed its demands on the poets; these, in the fourth century, needed to create rôles for certain actors.

As the mask restrained somewhat the play of features, so the tragic costume, on its part, imposed limits of motion. After Æschylus, if not earlier, it was made up of long, ample vestments of various colors, richly adorned and brodered, reaching to the ground. Imitated from the costume of hierophants and priests, it was adapted to represent tragic personages, kings, heralds, and demigods, in an aspect of religious majesty. To increase the effect, the actors made themselves taller by means of thick-soled sandals, which gave them a superhuman height. Of course the subordinate personages, though likewise masked, wore neither such rich vestments nor special sandals. The heroes were thus distinguished at sight by their appearance; and this alone would give a character of grandeur and dignity to their rôles, and so to the whole tragedy.

To complete these few indications about the material equipment of the theatre, and of tragic contests, we may add that the latter

ended with a formal decision. Judges, chosen under conditions that may have varied, and that are not well understood, assigned ranks and prizes of unequal merit to the three competitors. The official reports of the decisions were called *didascalía*. They were engraved on pillars, to preserve them as records. From these they were collected by such scholars of antiquity as occupied themselves with the history of the theatre, and thereby, consequently, have been transmitted to us.

**7. Structure of Tragedy: Its Parts.**<sup>1</sup>—If we pass from the setting of tragedy to its internal structure, we shall meet with a number of characteristic traits, which it may be well to note here.

Originating from the dithyramb by the introduction of a narrative element, Greek tragedy divided spontaneously, from its very origin, into recited parts and sung parts. Both were derived from one common source—the latter being employed instead of the former to express a more exalted state of feeling. Two leading changes transformed it from its primitive to its classic form. Dialogue more and more frequently took the place of narrative. Then the lyric element, almost predominant at the beginning, and remaining so till the time of Æschylus, lost in importance; while the dramatic element, represented by dialogue, gained. Yet, even to the last, traces of the ancient condition of things were manifest in the persistence of the chorus and in the fundamental simplicity of the action.

This gave rise naturally to the distinction of the parts of tragedy.

The prologue, by the definition of Aristotle, is the part preceding the entrance of the chorus. In some of the tragedies of Æschylus the chorus entered at the beginning. But this primitive usage disappeared in his old age. The prologue became a preparatory scene, devoted to the exposition of the plot. The scene was now a dialogue, now a monologue. In either case it had the same purpose.

Apart from the beginning, a tragedy is divided into a certain number of main divisions called episodes, which correspond roughly to our acts. The episodes are included between the chants of the chorus. The first chant bore the name of parodos; the others were called stasima. The last episode is sometimes also called the exode.

The parodos, as its name implies, is nothing other than the song for the entering of a chorus. The word *στάδιον* properly means a song without motion. It signifies the principal lyric passages sung by the chorus when that has once taken its place in the orchestra, whether these chants are accompanied by dances or not. Their

<sup>1</sup> Consult : B. Westphal, *Prolegomena zu Aeschylus Tragödien*, Leipzig, 1869, chap. 1; Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Euripides Heracles*, *sup. cit.*; Weil, *Le Dram antique*, *sup. cit.*; Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, art. *Actus*, 6.

essential function is to mark the divisions of the action. Very often, while they were being sung, no actors were present. In other cases, the action remained at least in suspense. Connected at first very closely with the story whose phases they marked, the odes were gradually detached from it, so as to be transformed into veritable interludes (*ἐμβόλιμα*). But the transformation, though admissible from the end of the fifth century, is but slightly evident in the great classic poets. This, therefore, is not the place to dwell on it at length.

The episodes might include, besides passages of spoken dialogue, shorter choral chants called episodic; lyric dialogues between the chorus and the actors (*κομμοί*); duets between actors (*τὰ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς*); and songs sung generally by the protagonist (*μονωδαίαι*). The episodes were not subjected, like our acts, to a common measure; but there were long ones and short ones. In the same play there might be great disproportion. Nor was their number rigorously determined. Usage early tended, however, to establish as normal the number of four episodes, to which were added the prologue. But this usage, which Horace long afterward stated as a rule,<sup>1</sup> was never rigorously followed by the poets of the fifth century. Sophocles particularly was far from being guided by it. The division into five acts, of whose origin we know little, was, at any rate, not definitely established till after classic times, in the Alexandrian period.

**8. Progress of the Action. The Unities.** — The various parts were necessarily connected by a certain development of interest, for development is the very law of drama. The development was due to the structure of the plot. But here each of the great poets had his own method, and these methods we shall try to characterize later on. We may say for the present that, if the action of a Greek tragedy became more complex from generation to generation, if it gave more importance to combinations of events, changes of fortune, recognitions, and theatrical effects, yet it remained simple in comparison with modern tragedies. There are generally few events, and these were not so closely connected and linked together as in modern drama. The progress of the development, too, was less harmonious. The personages are not all named in the prologue, nor all reunited in the final scene. They appear when needed, and disappear when their functions are performed. This was necessarily the case in Greek tragedy, as it had fewer actors than personages. But owing to this necessity, and probably to the instincts of its

<sup>1</sup> *Ars Poet.*, 189: —

Neve minor, neu sit quinto productior actu  
Fabula, quae posci vult et spectata reponi.

authors, it always kept great natural simplicity. Hence the terms plot (*δέσις*) and resolution (*λύσις*), and also that of peripetia (*περιπέτεια*), although applied by Aristotle to Greek tragedy in general, must always be understood in a free sense when one speaks of the dramas of the fifth century. A plot is really less a certain unexpected incident than a succession of scenes which gradually define the situation. Even the peripetia is not always brusque nor violent. The resolution generally continues beyond the final issue, and sometimes brings the situation relatively to peace.

It is from the tragic drama of the fourth and fifth centuries that the theory of the classic unities has been drawn. It is well to state here in a few words the historic value of that theory.

Unity of interest is really a law of art, being a law of the human mind. Its influence is especially felt in drama. Æschylus brought it to light by his examples; Sophocles and Euripides observed it after him. But we must note that it does not seem to have been applied in Greece with the rigor that certain modern theorists have wished to give it. Euripides particularly did not scruple to insert episodic passages into the principal story. It seems probable that this was the common practice in his day and afterward.

Unity of place was rendered almost necessary by the continual presence of the chorus. In the existing plays there are only two or three instances where the action was shifted from one place to another; for example, in the *Eumenides* of Æschylus and the *Ajax* of Sophocles. In general, everything happened in a certain place, which was determined from the beginning. We must own, however, that the determination was often rather vague, especially in the time of Æschylus; it became more and more precise, but certain liberties were always allowed. Often the action took place before a palace, before a tent, or near a tomb. But the objects represented are considered as separated by a fictitious distance, suitable to the demands of the action.

The unity of time was least rigorously observed. The principle seems to have been that the duration of the events should be precisely that of the representation, since the chorus was present throughout the action, and there were no interludes. But it was admitted by tacit convention that the time represented as having passed during the stasima was purely fictitious; and so what took place outside the scene during the chants of the chorus might be out of proportion with the time actually occupied by them. It happens, especially in Euripides, that between two episodes events take place which really would have required several hours, sometimes even more than a day. However, this takes place out of sight



of the spectators. The visible action, which the chorus witnessed as it was represented on the scene, seems almost always to have been comprised within the time of the representation; but with this exception, there was no concern about the contradiction that resulted.

Such are, very summarily, the conditions, or possibly the laws, of tragic action. But the action was represented by personages, about whom at least a little explanation is necessary.

**9. The Personages and the Chorus.**—The personages, strictly speaking, are either heroes or subordinates. We have already spoken of the tragic hero's costume; naturally his language corresponded to his appearance. After Æschylus, possibly sooner, there was a special language for tragedy, probably varying somewhat with the different poets, but always having certain common characteristics. Tragic personages spoke ordinarily in iambic trimeter, as this seemed to resemble most closely the language of everyday life. But the resemblance remained, on the whole, somewhat distant, and the use of rhythm gave to tragic conversation a pronounced ideal character. The attempt was never made in Greece to write prose drama. In the passages that demanded greater vivacity, trochaic tetrameter was sometimes used, which was the metre of primitive tragedy. But this was rare. Doubtless the metre was not well adapted to the nobility looked for in the heroes. The basis of the language was naturally the contemporary speech of Attica. From this it obtained its force and naturalness. But with the ordinary expressions were mingled poetic ones borrowed by the poet from epic or lyric language or coined by his imagination. The art lay in combining the various elements so as to suit the exigencies of the moment and the personage, and give the impression of reality and of the necessary idealization. The dialogue does not seem to have been subjected to strict rules. But here, as elsewhere, Greek art was marked by symmetry. It is not rare that the speeches of different personages should be quite alike in construction for a certain distance. When the movement becomes very rapid, the symmetry, instead of being lost, as one might expect, is heightened. There are some parts of the dialogue called *stichomythia*, in which each personage in turn speaks two verses, or a single verse, or half a verse, or still less. The groups or the fractions of verses correspond exactly. These various artifices permitted variation in the movement of the drama, and the translation, in a way, of the rhythm of sentiment into that of dialogue. Finally, the heroic personages passed quite often from simple declamation to chant; and this transition marked a still higher degree of pathos. Among the chants of the heroes, those that became most important as the play of passion became freer.

were naturally the monodies; for in them the talent of the actors could fittingly display itself.

In addition to the heroes, subordinates figured in the drama. Those most employed were the messengers (ἄγγελοι), who came to relate events that had taken place behind the scene. Their narratives, nearly always strongly pathetic, were almost necessary elements of a drama that purposely avoided tumultuous spectacles. As a rule, these are impersonal passages, in which the poet displays all his talent, without troubling himself much about the personality of the speaker. A few subordinate characters, however, have traits really their own. Such are particularly the pedagogues and the nurses, — humble confidants, and discreet counsellors, but sometimes also officious intermediaries, who appear mechanically in the tragedy when the action becomes too complex. Their language, though not essentially different, is simpler than that of the heroes. For Greek tragedy never employed a really popular dialect, as that would have destroyed the harmony of the whole.

Side by side with the personages proper is found the chorus. Its function in drama, though preponderant at the beginning, constantly diminished in importance. Till the end of the fifth century, however, the chorus continued to be interested in the action, or at least in the sentiment which that action inspires. If it did less and less acting, it did not cease to give counsel, express its opinions on passing events, and convey, in the language of emotion and in chants, the impressions it had of those events. In general, it took the part of some of the heroes. But strictly speaking, each of the great tragic writers conceived its rôle in his own way; and every general formula would be inexact. If it took part sometimes in the dialogue, speaking by the mouth of its coryphæus, yet one may say that its ordinary means of utterance was in song. We cannot enter here into the detailed forms of tragic choral odes, as they are extremely varied.<sup>1</sup> But the choral lyric of tragedy is distinguished from the ordinary choral lyric essentially by its freedom. Designed to express impassioned sentiment and imitate real life, it could not be limited to the forms prescribed for lyric poetry. Its metrical composition changes from strophe to strophe, and it prefers the metres that are most flexible and lively. Dochmiac and logaëdic rhythms are its favorites. The language of the lyric passages is substantially Attic like that of the dialogues, but with a slight mixture of Doric forms, designed to give the ode more gravity. Naturally, then, the ode admits a freedom of poetic license, a bold-

<sup>1</sup> Consult: P. Masqueray, *Théorie des formes lyriques de la tragédie grecque*, Paris, 1895.

ness of invention, a choice of words, which dialogue, more closely resembling ordinary life, cannot endure.

This sketch may give an idea of what Greek tragedy is as a type, and help to an understanding of the powers possessed by its action. One sees that it resembles both our opera and our classic tragedy. We must now pass, however, from this general and rather abstract description to a more concrete study of the works of those great poets by whom tragedy was formed, or produced, in its perfection.

## CHAPTER XI

### ÆSCHYLUS

1. Personality of Æschylus: his Genius.
2. His Work. His Relations to Epic Poetry. Structure of the Tetralogy.
3. His Extant Plays.
4. Inventions of Æschylus. His Conception of the Drama. Religious Sentiment of his Plays.
5. Other Inventions of Æschylus. Growth of the Dramatic Element. Nature of the Action.
6. The Sentiments and Characters. "Freedom of the Will." Relation of the Personages with one Another.
7. Lyric Passages in Æschylus: his Language.
8. Bequest of Æschylus to Tragedy.

**1. The Personality of Æschylus: his Genius.**<sup>1</sup>—At the end of the sixth century, after Thespis and in the time of his immediate successors, tragedy was established as a distinct literary type: it had become a part of literature. But it was still a somewhat humble type. Its latent forces needed development; beauty of spectacle and grandeur of dramatic effect were needed to supply the majesty it lacked, and it wanted philosophy to furnish it with material for reflection. This was the work of Æschylus, and it was so important that he may be considered as the father of this type of literature.

Æschylus, son of Euphorion, was born at Eleusis in 525 or 524 B.C., and belonged to a Eupatrid family. We know only some of the incidents of his life. According to Suidas, he took part in a tragic contest in the 70th Olympiad (500–497). He was at that time between twenty-five and thirty years of age. Then came the great national crisis of the Persian Wars. Æschylus fought as a hoplite at Marathon in 490 with the men of his tribe. He mentions the glorious deed in his epitaph. It is probable that he took an active part in the second Persian War, at Salamis, Plataea, and Artemisium. On these points we have only rare and untrustworthy evidences. As for the heroic deeds attributed to his brothers, Cynægirus and Aminias, it is impossible to-day to discern between legend and history. After the Persian Wars, he seems to have divided his time between Athens and Sicily, whither he was called

<sup>1</sup> CHIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES: The anonymous *Life*; Suidas, *s.v.* Αἰσχύλος; various notices in ancient authors.

Consult: Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, article *Æschylos*, for a detailed bibliography.



by the favor of Hiero, king of Syracuse. Victor for the first time in the contest of 484, according to the chronicle of Paros, he brought out the *Women of Ætna* in Sicily soon after 476, the *Persians* at Athens in 472 and at Syracuse a little later. In 468 he competed against the young Sophocles, who, however, obtained the prize. He brought out the *Seven against Thebes* at Athens in 467; and the *Oresteia* (*Agamemnon*, *Choëphoræ*, *Eumenides*) in the same city in 458. The dates of his other plays can be established only by conjecture and approximately. On the whole, his life seems to have been entirely devoted to his art. As poet and actor, he passed the best part of his life in composing plays which he, or other persons for him, represented at the dramatic contests.

Various accounts, though scarcely credible, were current in antiquity, which attributed his voyage to Sicily either to a sentence of exile passed against him, or to the mortification he felt at seeing his competitors preferred to himself. These accounts, however, are all based on insufficient evidence, and the known facts scarcely permit us to believe them. If Æschylus really had trouble with other citizens, he never ceased to take part in tragic contests at Athens; and the series of his successes continued to the end of his life. The anonymous biographer assigns to him thirteen victories, which represent probably a total of fifty-two prize plays. He belonged by birth and sentiment to the aristocracy, and must have seen with displeasure the progress of the democracy; but the reserve of certain allusions in the *Oresteia*, and the success it obtained, show that he never came into conflict with the majority of the citizens. Hence, after his victory in 458, he returned to Sicily of his own free will, not from mortification. He died at Gela in 457 or 456.

Judging from his works and a few scattered notices, we must think of him as proud, high-spirited, and imbued with a profound religious sentiment. The drama, as he conceived it, is full of religion. His predominant gift was imagination. Few poets have created so many images and new expressions. His imagination tended to grandeur, pomp, and powerful or terrible display of force. It was not highly susceptible of grace, sweetness, or delicacy. It was accompanied by a vigorous and subtle power of thought: a remarkable faculty of reasoning, connecting ideas together, and bringing them into harmony or contrast; and a true genius for organization, capable of grasping great wholes without losing sight of the details. Such a man, giving his attention to a kind of literary composition still in its infancy, could not fail to transform it. He had a capacity for bold pictures, and lacked no quality essential for portraying them.

**2. His Work. His Relations to Epic Poetry. Structure of the Tetralogy.**<sup>1</sup>—A comparison of evidences, notwithstanding divergences that can be brought into plausible harmony, leads to the belief that he composed seventy tragedies and twenty satyr-dramas. Of this great number, we have only seven tragedies, with a catalogue of titles and a rather large number of fragments. There were attributed to him also some elegies and pæans.

The subjects of all his dramatic compositions excepting the *Persians* seem to have been derived from epic poetry. In trying to reconstruct approximately the lost plays from the titles, fragments, and notices extant, one must build up an ample series of heroic scenes already treated by Homer and the cyclic poets. The great tragic poet gathered together, as he says in the account of Athenæus, "the crumbs that fell from Homer's table." But in so doing, he merely followed the example set by his predecessors from the times of the dithyramb. However, the grandeur of his work and its extent made him more like the epic poets. The legends from which he borrowed most are those of the Trojan War and of Thebes and Argos, which are precisely the ones made most illustrious in epic song. We must not forget, however, that these epic legacies came to him after passing through the medium of lyric poetry. Indeed we can often discern the influence of the latter on his conceptions; and this influence would appear more plainly still if the works of the great lyric writers of the seventh and sixth centuries were better known.

A certain number of his plays were grouped into tetralogies; that is, they were combined in series of three tragedies (tragic trilogy) and a satyr-drama. Here is an interesting fact, that gives rise to several questions almost defying solution.

We have seen that from the time of Æschylus, it was a rule in dramatic contests that every poet competing at the Great Dionysia should bring out one such series. The usage continued through the fifth century. But we can neither assert that it was in force outside of Athens, nor say how or when it arose. Besides, some series were composed of connected plays, being based on the same general theme, which they developed as so many successive acts would do. This may be called organic tetralogy, in distinction from the loose tetralogy formed of independent plays. Our question here is

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Welcker, *Æschylische Trilogie*. Darmstadt, 1824; *Die griechischen Tragödien*, Bonn, 1839, I; G. Hermann, *Opuscula*, vol. II; Patin, *Études sur les tragiques grecs*, vol. I, *sup. cit.*; Westphal, *Prolegomena zu Æschylos Tragödien*, Leipsic, 1869; Weil, *Études sur le drame antique*, *sup. cit.*; and the notices appended to the editions of the fragments of Æschylus as mentioned later on.

whether all the plays of Æschylus were subject, as has sometimes been thought and asserted, to this rigorous mode of grouping.

If the figures given above are correct, it is evident at once that they are inconsistent with the supposition of an exact number of tetralogies. They indicate that Æschylus, in any case, probably composed at least ten independent tragedies. These may have been for representation outside of Athens or may have belonged to a period of his life when the rule in question was not in force. A large number of plays, on the other hand, were certainly grouped in threes. But did the groups form organic trilogies? It seems certain that they did not; for we know at least one such,—that including the *Persians*,—which could not possibly have been an organic group. However, it is probably an exception; and most of the plays must have been united in groups analogous to the *Oresteia*. We are assured of this for a certain number, and have reason to believe it true for many others, because the plays themselves, in a way, call for such a combination. Whether the usage is anterior to Æschylus or not, whether he created it entirely, or simply perfected and made it regular, one may, in any case, owing to the extent to which he practised it, consider the usage characteristic of his work. The amplitude of the trilogy corresponded to the natural grandeur of his thought, the tendency of his imagination to form well-arranged conceptions, and also, as we shall see, to his philosophy of the divine and human. Besides, it gave tragedy something of the majesty of epic, and so was admirably adapted to his high ambition.

**3. The Extant Plays.**<sup>1</sup>—The seven extant tragedies, following the chronological order attested for five and most probable for the other two, are these: the *Suppliants*, whose date is uncertain; the *Persians* (472); the *Seven against Thebes* (467); *Prometheus Bound*, a play doubtless somewhat later than the preceding; and the group of the *Oresteia* (458), including the *Agamemnon*, the *Choëphoræ*, and the *Eumenides*. The *Suppliants*, a tragedy almost elementary in structure<sup>2</sup> in which lyric passages predominate, must be regarded as the first part of a lost trilogy connected with the legendary history of Argos. In it Æschylus represented the daughters of Danaus as fleeing from Libya and disembarking at Argos to escape the pursuit

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: G. Dindorf, *Æschyli Tragicæ*, with excursus, notes, and scholia, 3 vols., Oxford, 1811-1851; Ahrens, *Æschyli Tragicæ et Fragmenta*, Paris, Didot, 1842; H. Weil, *Æschyli Tragicæ*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1884 and 1896; Wecklein, *Æschyli Tragicæ et Fragmenta*, with the scholia of the Mediceus, 3 vols., Berlin, 1885-1893,—an important critical edition. The fragments are given also in Nauck, *Tragicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, *sup. cit.* English edition with notes by F. A. Paley, London, 1887. English metrical translation by Plumptre; and a good prose translation by Lewis Campbell.

LEXICONS: Dindorf, *Lexicon Æschyleum*, Leipzig, 1876.

of their cousins, the sons of Egyptus. The *Persians*, the only historical tragedy in the collection, was brought out in connection with two independent plays on mythological themes. The drama, then, is complete in itself. Its subject is the defeat of Xerxes; and it is freely imitated from the *Phoenissæ* of Phrynichus. Lyric and narrative passages still occupy the greater part of the play. The *Seven against Thebes* is the only play extant of a Theban trilogy, of which it formed the close. The other two plays were entitled *Laius* and *Ædipus*. In the *Seven*, the poet represents the fratricidal strife between the two sons of Ædipus for their father's heritage. The action, though composed principally of narratives and descriptions, has real progressive movement; and the principal personage, Eteocles, is drawn in vigorous relief. *Prometheus Bound* is likewise one play of a trilogy, which no one has been able with certainty to reconstruct. Æschylus here shows the Titan Prometheus, the benefactor of humanity, as cruelly punished by Zeus for his love of mankind. The play was followed by a lost tragedy entitled *Prometheus Unbound*, in which Heracles, after three cycles of ten thousand years, put an end to the unfortunate Titan's torture. Perhaps the trilogy was completed by a third tragedy, also lost, which, we have reason to believe, was the *Prometheus Pyrphorus* (*Fire-bearer*). It represented the institution of the Prometheus cult in Attica. The *Prometheus Bound* has little action; but it is admirable for its beauty of spectacle, and the grandeur of the situation and of the principal personage. Unlike the preceding, it seems to have demanded the simultaneous presence of three actors. The *Oresteia* is the last work of Æschylus, and the one that marks the culmination of his art and genius. The three plays of the trilogy treated the murder of Agamemnon. In the first, entitled *Agamemnon*, the king of Mycenæ, returning from Troy, is assassinated by his wife, Clytemnestra, aided by her paramour Ægisthus. In the second, the *Choëphoræ*, the action of which takes place some ten years later. Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, having grown up in exile, returns to his palace in disguise, reveals himself to his sister Electra, and, to accomplish the bidding of Apollo, avenges his father by killing Ægisthus and his own mother, Clytemnestra. In the third, the *Eumenides*, which immediately follows the *Choëphoræ* in time, Orestes, pursued by the Erinnyes but protected by Apollo, flees from Delphi to Athens. There he is tried by a court, the Areopagus, which on this occasion Athena institutes and presides over. He is acquitted; the Erinnyes, appeased by Athena, become protectresses of Attica under their new name of Eumenides. The three plays demand the employment of three actors in each. Though scarcely equal in force of ideas and



sentiments to the preceding plays, they are superior in dramatic execution.

And these are all we have of a truly great series of plays. It is, indeed, very little; and yet one can glean from these fragments the principal characteristics of his art.

**4. Inventions of Æschylus. His Conception of Drama. His Religious Sentiment.**<sup>1</sup>—Æschylus was engaged from the first in enriching tragedy; for he wished it to have an imposing pomp even in the actual representation. He improved the masks, probably to give them more expression. He dressed his actors in sumptuous costume. He was perhaps the first to have them put on sandals with thick soles, that they might appear taller. If painted scenery was not used, as is probable, till the end of his life or till after his time, yet it is certain that he took pleasure in magnificent spectacles. He loved to astonish the beholder's eyes at the same time that he surprised his mind. In the *Suppliants*, the *Persians*, the *Seven*, and the *Agamemnon*, kings and queens appear, making pompous entrées, sometimes on chariots, always in rich costume, and surrounded by a numerous train of attendants. In the *Prometheus*, one beholds a mass of rocks in the midst of a desert; thither came the Oceanides on a winged chariot; the god Oceanus appeared on the back of a griffin, which was represented as bearing him through space. One beheld the Titan's punishment, and finally the collapse of the mountain to which he was bound, and its disappearance. All this was effected with rather simple machinery; but the effect, on an audience none too critical, must have been great. The appearance of the Erinyes in the last play of the *Oresteia*, their passage across the orchestra, and their weird dances, left behind them a memory of something terrible, which, indeed, the legend may have exaggerated later; but the existence of such a legend certainly proves the vividness of the first impression.

And all this was no empty spectacle. The outward pomp served but to express the grandeur of the conception. Æschylus was not content, like his predecessors, with putting heroic legends into dramatic form: he wished them to appear as so many revelations of the will of the gods. Being naturally meditative, he instinctively sought for the mysterious causes anterior to the events. His drama was always constructed so as, if not to explain these causes, which would often have been to minimize them, at least to make their presence felt and inspire the needful awe. This was probably his chief innovation.

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Patin, *Les Tragiques grecs*, I; J. Girard, *Le Sentiment religieux*; Weil, *Le Drame antique*; Westphal, *prolegomena*, *sup. cit.*; and Richter, *Zur Dramaturgie des Aeschylos*, Leipsic, 1892.

Religious sentiment had not been wanting in his predecessors; there was no lyric form entirely devoid of it, and least of all the dithyramb: but what had been rare and scattered, as it were, he gathered together and concentrated into the powerful unity of his dramas, and set it in relief by the force of his genius. Every trilogy, every tragedy, was the dramatic setting forth of some great work of destiny; and, thus conceived, it henceforth awoke men's thoughts as well as their emotions.

Æschylus is not properly a philosopher, as has sometimes been said, with exaggeration, nor even a theologian. A poet above all, and a dramatist, he always sees causes concealed beneath the living forms. He does not separate them from their effects in human suffering and the events of life. He does not realize them in abstract formulas capable of logical union, and of producing, by their combinations, a complete theory of the universe; of all this, on the contrary, he has only an intuition, a profound sentiment. He never seeks even to take away its obscurity. This mysterious obscurity is a necessary element of the supernatural vision which imposed itself on him and with which he made his public acquainted. To show that beyond visible things, there are distant, impressive causes not at once visible; that human action does not have in itself its whole justification nor its whole explanation; that it obeys unconsciously an unknown, higher power; and that, after its excitement and illusions, the human soul often attains ends that it has not sought, — this constitutes his inspiration; this is what he deems the true function of dramatic art.

Just what is it that he objectifies into this superhuman realm? Is it some blind destiny? Or is it a just, beneficent will? It is quite doubtful whether he himself could have replied definitely to such a question. His beliefs were probably the same as those of his contemporaries — a mixture of ideas gradually superimposed on one another, not always capable of reconciliation. It seems that, at bottom, one may find a more or less confused idea of force, blind and irresistible, a necessity controlling things, ἀνάγκη. But it is certain also that, if this is his idea, it is, as it were, relegated to the background. It is manifested principally in certain unalterable laws, such as heredity, the transmission of curses, the force of malediction, the rôle of the Erinnyes. In *Prometheus*, it is true, we see Zeus himself subordinated to a fatality from which he cannot escape; but the case is an exception. On the whole, what Æschylus aims to show is the will of the gods, well-pondered, reasonable, clear in its purposes, and, in short, aiming at good. But this is rather a tendency than a clearly defined aim. It must neither be exaggerated nor left

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out of account. What must be said above all is that, in such problems, the solution signifies less for the poet than does the problem itself. The latter is an intrinsic part of the drama; the solution is beyond the drama, entering in only through the curiosity to understand it which it excites.

**5. Other Inventions of Æschylus. Growth of the Dramatic Element. Nature of the Action.** — By the introduction of such religious views, he had given tragedy a wholly new character. At the same time, he renewed it in structure by developing the dramatic element. His innovations in this respect may be summed up by saying that he limited the part taken by the chorus in the action, and introduced the second actor. The two facts had important consequences.

In the *Suppliants*, probably the oldest of his extant tragedies, the chorus plays the part of the protagonist. Its will is the principal spring of action; our chief interest is in its sufferings, its fears, its desires. Hence its chants have a length that limits, to the like extent, the part of dialogue. If we extend them still more in imagination, we shall no doubt have a fairly exact idea of what tragedy was before his time. To see that the chorus, a collective personage, could not have the same dramatic value as an individual, and in consequence to reduce its importance for the sake of developing that of the individuals, was, in reality, to separate the drama from lyric poetry. It was the merit of Æschylus that he did this. The change was really on the point of being brought about at the time of the *Suppliants*. It is effected in all the other extant plays. The lyric parts, indeed, are still very long, yet not so long as before; and above all, the chorus has ceased to be so prominent. Instead of a group, we have henceforth isolated personages, with their own characteristics, leading in the action. Hence our interest centres on certain superior characters, that have fallen a prey to destiny.

In each of the plays these dramatic persons are still far from numerous; yet there are always several, and this gives occasion for animated activity. All the extant tragedies of Æschylus, including the *Suppliants*, demand at least two actors for their performance. The *Prometheus Bound* and the *Oresteia* demand three. Æschylus, therefore, introduced the second actor in the early part of his life; and made use later of the third, which was introduced by Sophocles in 468, or thereabouts.

The drama of Æschylus always advances toward a single event. It permits only slight digressions, and then not many of them, few or no surprises, and no theatrical hits. From the first, one dramatic situation is kept in view. This announces and makes us expect a definite event; the play proceeds toward its goal along a

straight, continuous course; then the resolution comes, and ends the action. Nothing could be less complicated, nor could anything better justify Aristotle's appellation, "simple tragedy." The play thus constructed is made up partly of chants, and partly of narratives and descriptions; and so admits a lyric and an epic element which are still of great importance. Sometimes the episodic scenes even add to the principal subject, and bring to it, so to speak, a new tribute of narrations; such is the episode of Io in the *Prometheus Bound*. But it is undeniable, too, that in the oldest Æschylean plays we know of, the dramatic element is predominant; and the predominance is observable even in the latest plays. The new elements are, first, the dialogue, which brings out with admirable emphasis the phases of the principal situation and the emotions of the personages; and secondly, a few great scenic inventions, which, owing to the resources of the theatre, have an imposing effect on the spectator. In the *Agamemnon*, the chief phases of the action are admirably marked, each in turn. The king's entry into his palace over the purple rug placed on the ground by Clytemnestra, the delirium of Cassandra, the cries uttered behind the scene, the sudden reappearance of the murderers covered with blood, and the unexpected sight of the corpses are striking facts, that give a series of deep, keen impressions. Such effects belong neither to lyric nor to epic poetry, but only to the theatre. The whole *Oresteia* is full of them; and among the earlier plays, there is not one that does not have at least a few.

#### 6. The Sentiments and the Characters. "Freedom of the Will."

**Relations of the Personages with one Another.**—Dramas thus constructed scarcely lend themselves to the portrayal of a great variety of sentiment. The poet's psychology is simple, like the action of his plays; but, like that action, it is strong and striking. In almost all his tragedies the leading personage is carried along by a powerful, passionate will, which is manifest from the beginning. In general, this does but little reasoning; there is no marked internal deliberation, such as is expressed in monologue or dialogue. The will is part of the personage's nature, brings about his situation, is one of his deepest passions, is really himself, and therefore inflexible. Such is the will of the Danaïds, of Eteocles, of Prometheus, of Clytemnestra, and of Orestes. It resembles irresistible force, and has something superhuman in its intensity and rashness. It is never in conflict with itself. The personages often suffer for too great resolution; they see its danger, difficulties, and horror, but that does not restrain them. One must look carefully to find in them even a slight trace of hesitation. In general, the motives which should make them shrink serve only to excite them more and to inflame their passions.



Warnings and restraining counsels, when received, have no effect. They regard their ideas as inevitable necessities that they can but follow out.

This haughty rigidity, this total abandonment of the soul to a single passion, scarcely permits us to consider that the characters are complete. Yet they are characters in an ideal sense, since they have individuality. What they have in common is strong, abundant sentiment. Herein the lyric principle shows its persistence in the great dramatic figures. Each one is a profound personality, rich in emotions and passions, sorrows and desires, that overflow in speech, and manifest themselves in prayers, lamentations, protests, proud assertions, or defiance. In the fundamental uniformity of their moral life, there is a possibility for new creations without limit.

What is the force that drives them on? Is it free will? Is it some higher power of fate working in them and substituting itself for them? The question has often been asked, and the answers have been various. Perhaps no absolute reply can be given. There are personages, such as Prometheus, in whom personal freedom is so clear as to be undeniable. It is true that, in the end, their liberty seems to come to results conforming with the decrees of a higher destiny. But if one wished to scrutinize matters from such a point of view, one would touch upon the very definition of free will, a problem of higher metaphysics which Æschylus certainly never wished to elucidate and probably never conceived. What he represents in Prometheus is what all the world calls moral liberty; and we need not go farther. The question is more obscure in the case of Xerxes, pushed along to ruin by the dizziness that the gods have sent upon him; or Eteocles, seized with a delirium in which his father's curse is manifest, and which ends in fratricide; or Clytemnestra, accomplishing upon the son of Atreus the inherited curse of his family; or Orestes, sent in arms against his mother by a formal oracular response, and excited to murder by divine terrors. Are all these personages free? Is it a spectacle of human will the poet is depicting? Or is it only the appearance of will—will dominated by a higher power? Here again, in order to reply with truth, one must reply without too great precision, without caring for a refined nicety foreign to the poet and his contemporaries. All these personages do obey a mysterious, divine power that goes surely to its goal. But there is no conflict, not even real duality. The higher power is in agreement with their will, their ideas, their passions; it does not oppose nor stifle their personality, but permits this to act without constraint. All the personages, while doing what destiny and the gods have ordained, do also what they wish themselves;

they act after their manner, according to their passions and momentary wishes. They could not do otherwise without doing violence to themselves. They are, therefore, free in the sense everywhere given to the word, free as we are ourselves, though we obey the eternal laws of the universe — free by the consciousness they have of willing a certain act and doing it in accordance with their own sentiments. If there is obscurity in all this, it belongs, not to tragedy, but to the fundamental conditions of life, and lies beneath even reality itself.

As soon as there were several personages acting in the Greek theatre, the manner of harmonizing or opposing them, and of bringing out the character of some by means of others, necessarily became one of the delicate functions of the poet's art. Æschylus, in introducing the second actor, and so multiplying the number of rôles, was compelled to pay much more attention to this matter. Here, again, he established commanding precedents.

In the *Suppliants*, the protagonist, who played successively the parts of Danaus and Egyptus, still had only a secondary rôle. But in the *Persians*, Atossa is quite in the first rank; and from then on, a law of the hierarchy of rôles was clearly defined. Eteocles in the *Seren*, Prometheus in the tragedy which bears his name, Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon*, Orestes in the *Choëphore* and in the *Eumenides*, have a dramatic importance which admits no equal. But if they owe this in the first place to themselves, to the intensity of their passions or sufferings, they owe it also in part — and this is well worth noting — to their relations with the personages that surround them. Almost all the rôles of second or third order are conceived and arranged, not only to bring out the action, but also in the interest of the principal rôle — to make it brilliant and aid in developing and defining it. This truth is striking, and especially so when one studies the rôles of the chorus or of the Messenger in the *Seven*: those of Hephæstus, Oceanus, Io, and the Oceanides in the *Prometheus*; those of Electra and the chorus in the *Choëphore*; and those of the Pythia and Apollo in the *Eumenides*. Perhaps the knowledge of contrasts, the science of delicate harmony or opposition, has not yet been fully evolved; the sentiments in his plays have not sufficient variety for that. When we read him to compare him with Sophocles, we see that there remains still much art to be developed; but it is certain that Æschylus at least sketched the way, and showed, so to speak, what the art was to become.

**7. The Lyric Passages of Æschylus. His Language.**<sup>1</sup> — To these

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Masqueray. *Théorie*, etc., *sup. cit.*; Maury. *De Cantus in Æschyleis Tragædiis Distributione*. Paris, 1891.

innovations, there must be added a final one, not the least in importance. It is he, according to the testimony of Aristophanes (*Frogs*, l. 1004), who really created a tragic style.

This is principally lyric in its origin and in its essential character. Hence it is in lyric passages that it displays its greatest richness. One must remember that these passages have an abundance and magnificence that were nearly lost in later times. They are compositions, sometimes very extensive, in which the poet devotes himself to combinations of rhythm and structures of symmetry in a truly astonishing architecture of strophes. His language is that which lends itself most readily to long developments. Its distinctive traits are boldness, brilliance, amplitude, and dignity. It is full of compound words that strike the ear with their resonant qualities and catch the attention by their profusion of accumulated figures and the terseness of their thought. Though equally subtle and powerful, the style is often obscure when considered in detail; it is so for us, and was so for the Athenians. But complete, precise intelligence is not essential to the effect. This dithyrambic style is like a picture painted large, that must be viewed from a distance. Sung by a chorus and sustained by melody, the strophes run along splendidly. All is grand, mournful, or terrible; great thoughts appear vaguely beneath numerous splendid metaphors, and enthusiasm creates in abundance new and marvellous expressions. These glowing, majestic strophes were planned to dazzle the multitude and produce in their minds a sort of intoxication. Even to-day, though the musical accompaniment and the melody are in default, and difficulties have arisen through alterations of the text, it is impossible to read without deep emotion such compositions as the song of terror of the Theban women in the *Seven*, the parodos of the *Agamemnon*, the lyric dialogue of Cassandra and the chorus in the same play, that of Orestes and Electra in the *Choëphoræ*, or the song of the Erinnyes pursuing the parricide in the *Eumenides*. No doubt many details in these passages escape or embarrass us; but the effect of the whole is irresistible.

Though so admirable in lyric passages, the language of these dramas is less appropriate to the really dramatic parts. Its uniformity would be ill adapted to represent the various phases of life, even if the poet attempted to do this; but we have seen that he employed a lyric style even in the portrayal of character. The personages are all lofty in sentiment; and as a matter of fact, his language seems fit to express exaltation. The narrative passages and the dialogues are stately, like the choral odes. Yet if the language has everywhere the same essential character, the lyric parts have much

more boldness and dithyrambic pomp than the others. The tendencies elsewhere are the same, but more moderate, more in conformity with general usage, more considerate of the demands of clearness. While the imagination is more reserved, logic and the connection of ideas become more evident. If the poet needs to disclose facts, his diction can be modified to suit the movement of the narrative; and the language, without ceasing to be dignified, does not astonish a public that wished, above all else, to understand. If he must reason, his acute, skilful dialectic removes the metaphors when necessary to bring out the argument. This is evident chiefly in animated dialogues, where each verse is a question or a response, a petition or a refusal, an attack or a parry. His language at such times is short and spirited, terse, and singularly agile, though still somewhat formal. It is here chiefly that it shows its dramatic aptitudes and indicates how much it must be modified to be completely suited to the action. Here also it is just to maintain for Æschylus the claim of priority. But in general, it remains true that his style is lyric rather than dramatic.

8. **The Bequest of Æschylus to Tragedy.** — By way of *résumé*: Æschylus brought drama out of its infancy and made it a literary type to which no other ever became superior or, possibly, even equal. He gave to it a final structure, at least in essentials; and what is better still, he raised it in imagination, sentiment, thought, and style to a height which his predecessors had not thought possible. In the first half of the fifth century it became, owing to him, an established work of art; for it united beauty of spectacle, simplicity and force of conception, power of pathos, and grandeur of sentiment and ideas, with deep interest in problems relating to destiny. Moreover, these merits are not found simply side by side, in his work, but are united, as it were, and condensed. Owing to the concentration that belongs to drama, they obtained a new power from mutually aiding each other. The result is something absolutely new, in which all known forms of composition are fused and improved. The product, therefore, makes a profound impression on its audience. The empire of the drama, which is the great literary fact of the fifth century, owed its creation to Æschylus.

Tragedy as he left it — admirable, strong, and simple — had nothing more to gain in majesty nor in power. But it could improve in truthfulness to psychology, in variety of sentiments and ideas, in flexibility of movement, and in the art of digressions and surprises. To make it, on the one hand, more lifelike, and on the other, stronger in pathos through more skilful handling of the action, was the task accomplished by his successors, Sophocles and Euripides.



## CHAPTER XII

### SOPHOCLES

1. The Man : his Character and Genius. 2. His Work. His Extant Tragedies. 3. His Innovations : Prominence of Human Interest ; Abandonment of the Organic Trilogy ; the Third Actor ; Resulting Development of the Action. 4. The Personages. Ideal Representation of Character. Limited Variety of Will and Sentiment. Moral Tone of the Plays. 5. The Chorus : its Rôle. The Lyric Passages. 6. Sophocles as a Writer. His Influence.

1. **The Man : his Character and Genius.**<sup>1</sup> — There is no contrast and no very profound difference between Sophocles and Æschylus. The latter continued the work of the former. He had essentially the same ideas of things divine and human, the same sympathy with a heroic ideal, the same general conception of drama ; yet he modified the work of his predecessor enough to give it a new aspect. Æschylus was an old Athenian of the time of the Persian Wars ; Sophocles was a contemporary of Pericles and Phidias.

Born at Colonus, just out of Athens, in 497 or 495, Sophocles, son of Sophillus, belonged to a good family and was carefully educated. From his youth, his beauty, good grace, and musical talent, developed under the instruction of Lampros, made him a general favorite. In 480, at the age of fifteen or seventeen, he was chosen to lead, playing the lyre and singing, a chorus of youths who celebrated the victory at Salamis. His taste for poetry was perhaps early manifest. He was hardly twenty-nine, or possibly not twenty-seven, when he won the prize from Æschylus in the dramatic contest of 468. After that, he never ceased writing for the theatre. He played, it is said, some of his own rôles when he was young, but later gave up acting. His success continued for sixty-three years, or until his death. He won twenty victories ; and, according to his biographers, never obtained less than the second prize in any contest. No poet was so constantly in the enjoyment of public favor : the taste of Athens found in his works the completest satisfaction.

The chronology of his plays, unfortunately, is so little known as scarcely to offer well-determined dates from which his literary career can be divided into periods. We are hardly better informed about

<sup>1</sup> The anonymous *Life*, in Westermann, *Vitarum Scriptores*, and in most editions ; Suidas, *Lexicon*, s.v. Σοφοκλῆς ; *Sophocles vita* in Dindorf's edition.

his public life. Though devoted almost wholly to his art, he held certain offices. Twice he was strategus, first in 439, and again later; but the later date is not known. He was also 'Ελληνοταμίης.<sup>1</sup> And he seems to have performed public duties in 413 and 411, in the service of the moderate party. "In public affairs," wrote one of his contemporaries, the poet Ion, "he showed neither aptitude nor unusual activity; he was a good citizen of Athens, and that is all." This means that, being intelligent and devoted to his country, he was always ready to serve it; but that he had no ambition, and did not enter into politics except when necessary. His private life is equally obscure. Soon after his death, Aristophanes represented him as a happy man, whose peaceful existence had never been disturbed. His gentle, pleasing humor Aristophanes also praised; and his character, which was called exempt from envy. However, his biographers speak of strong passions that disturbed his quiet life; of discord between his sons; and even of a judicial process that some of them brought against him. All these evidences are, however, very untrustworthy. He appears to have married twice. By his first wife he had a son named Iophon, who, like his father, was a tragic poet, and who achieved some success; by his second, he had another son named Aristo, who perhaps likewise wrote tragedies. Aristo, in turn, was the father of Sophocles the younger, also a tragic poet. He is said to have brought out his grandfather's *Œdipus at Colonus* a few years after the poet's death.

Sophocles, with his affable, amiable character, could not but come into relations of friendship at Athens with some of the prominent men of the time. As strategus, he was the colleague of Pericles. He knew Herodotus, and about 450 addressed to him an elegy, of which we have one verse. We are not informed that he was associated with any of the sophists or philosophers of the time. His interest was rather in poetry and the incidents of life than in theories or speculative research. In religious belief, he was apparently a follower of tradition — religious without question, yet not narrow. He even held a priestly office.

Imagination in his work has not the same ardor and power as in that of Æschylus: its force was more moderate, its abundance more discreet; but it was also more brilliant, luminous, and capable of sweetness and grace. Every human sentiment had an echo in his heart. He easily conceived every form and degree of passion — tender affection, delicate, sublime devotion, remorse, fond remembrances, as well as wrath, hatred, and resentment. His character was pliant,

<sup>1</sup> [The 'Ελληνοταμίαι were a board of magistrates whose duty it was to collect the tribute from the allied states. — Tr.]

neither stiff nor harsh, capable of sympathizing with all the aspects of life, and of reproducing them in language. His clear and vigorous reason was equal to the employment of the best logic, always free in dialectic and never arbitrary. He had a charming vivacity, a wide experience of life, and, what is better, a sure and prompt intuition of moral truth, an exquisite appreciation of shades of difference, and a natural delicacy—united to a feeling for grandeur and a liking for the ideal. It is remarkable that these endowments, which favored creative spontaneity, should be united with the habit of serious reflection. Yet his poetic creations show eminently this double character; nothing is more natural, more free, more true to life, more carefully studied, or better combined. If the essential character of Atticism is ease in the quest for perfection and reserve in the use of force, there is no more truly Attic genius than his.

**2. The Work of Sophocles. His Extant Tragedies.**<sup>1</sup>—The number of plays he composed is not certainly attested, owing to considerable divergence in the accounts. One may estimate it approximately as one hundred and fifteen or one hundred and twenty, partly tragedies, partly satyr-dramas. Besides, he was reputed to have written some elegies, some pæans, and a prose work on the chorus.

The tragic themes he treated do not appear to have been different from those of Æschylus. They were borrowed wholly from heroic legends, particularly from those made popular in epic poetry. A large number of his tragedies developed subjects that were mere portions of the epic cycle adapted for the theatre. The great majority of his plays are represented to-day only by fragments, which generally do not enable us even to determine their structure. Seven have been preserved entire.

The three oldest are probably *Antigone*, *Electra*, and *Ajax*. It is impossible to determine certainly their chronological order, or to fix

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: G. Dindorf, *Sophoclis Tragicæ et Fragmenta*, with excursus, notes, and scholia, 8 vols., Oxford, 1832–1849; Dindorf-Mekler, Leipsic, 1885; Benlôw and Ahrens, *Sophoclis Tragicæ et Fragmenta*, Paris, Didot, 1842; Tournier, *Les Tragédies de Sophocle*, with introduction and notes, Paris, Hachette, 2d ed., 1877; Schneidewin und Nauck, *Sophokles*, with introduction, excursus, and notes, Leipsic, 1849–1878; Blaydes-Paley, *Sophocles*, with notes and introduction, London, 1859–1880; Campbell, *Sophocles*, with notes and introduction, Oxford, 1879–1881; Wolff-Bellermann, *Sophokles*, with introduction and critical and exegetical notes, Leipsic, Teubner, 3d ed., 1885; R. C. Jebb, *Sophocles*, with introduction, notes, and a superb English translation, Cambridge, 1887–1896. Translations into English verse by E. H. Plumptre, London, 1865; and Lewis Campbell, London, 1883.

LEXICONS: Ellendt und Genthe, Berlin, 1867–1872; G. Dindorf, 1871.

Consult the works of Welcker, Patin, Girard, *sup. cit.*; and also K. F. Hermann, *Zur Reihenfolge der sophokleischen Dramen* (in *Zeitschr. f. d. Gymnasiol.*, 1853, p. 866).

the date of any one of the three. The evidence accepted for placing the *Antigone* about 440 is exceedingly untrustworthy.

The subject of the *Antigone* is the heroic devotion of the maid who is its leading character. She buries her brother Polynices against the command of her uncle Creon, king of Thebes, and pays for the act of piety with her life. The beauty of the play results chiefly from the young heroine's character. Then, too, owing to the clever way in which the action is treated, the poet obtained really dramatic scenes from a very simple subject. It is the only one of his tragedies in which no single verse of the dialogue is divided between two or more personages. This fact is an important indication of the probable date of the play.

The *Electra* is like the *Antigone* in the character of the leading personage and of her rôle. In both plays, the poet has chosen a young girl and has given the two heroines the same firmness. The subject is the same as that of the *Choëphoræ* of Æschylus, the murder of Clytemnestra and Ægisthus by Orestes and his sister to avenge their father. But in again employing the subject, Sophocles virtually renewed it. The leading rôle belongs no longer to Orestes, but to Electra. The poet aims to interest us principally in the depiction of her sentiments, and this depiction is infinitely more varied than in Æschylus. The progress of the action, too, is quite different. The recognition between brother and sister, instead of taking place in the beginning of the play, is reserved for the latter part. Thus the suspense of Electra is prolonged, and her spirit passes through alternations of hope and despair, which make it possible for her to reveal her whole nature.

The subject of the *Ajax* is the suicide of the hero of that name, the son of Telamon, a man dear to the Athenians, and the eponymous hero of one of their tribes. Imitation of Homer is here quite noticeable: Ajax recalls Hector, as his captive, Tecmessa, suggests Andromache. The action is so managed that the public shall feel from the beginning his resolution to end his life. But the other persons do not discern his intentions; and we see them passing through phases of dread, supplication, hope, and sorrow, that are very touching. The hero himself, though not essentially changing his sentiments, yet passes through various phases, from delirium to haughty, sullen calm, mingled with hatred and remorse. The last part of the play is of a larger horizon, and has a moral tendency, in that Ajax is excused and even honored before the Greek chiefs by his rival, Odysseus, who obtains for him the honors of burial.

*Œdipus the King*, which apparently belongs to the middle of the poet's literary career, must be regarded as his masterpiece. Its



subject is borrowed from an *Œdipus* of Æschylus now lost; it is the revelation of the involuntary crimes of Œdipus and the terrible punishment he inflicts upon himself. But Sophocles meant that, in this drama where the part of the gods seems to be everything, the will of his hero should be evident as the chief spring of action and the leading subject of interest. It is Œdipus who conducts the inquest against himself; he goes from discovery to discovery, straight to his doom, with a sort of irresistible rashness. His whole character is displayed in a struggle against he knows not what. The design of the play cannot be too much admired. The action progresses steadily, even hastily; the spectator's anxiety increases from scene to scene, till, pushed to the extreme, it is finally resolved into deep pity. The secondary characters are admirably grouped about the protagonist, and all are natural and true to life. Finally, among all his choral odes those of this play are preëminent for their variety, lending themselves to the sympathetic expression of the most diverse sentiments.

In the *Philoctetes*, which was presented in 409, Sophocles treated and renewed a subject already used by Æschylus and Euripides. Odysseus comes to seek Philoctetes, who had been abandoned by the Greeks in the isle of Lemnos ten years before, but was designated by an oracle as the person able to take Troy. Odysseus succeeded finally in taking him away through the supernatural intervention of Heracles. The invention due to Sophocles is the rôle of the deuteragonist, Neoptolemus, whom Odysseus tried to make use of in deceiving Philoctetes, but who, by his natural uprightness, hindered the wily schemes of Odysseus. This rôle, in itself charming, serves chiefly to emphasize that of the leading hero, giving him occasion to appear in various aspects without, however, encroaching upon the fundamental constancy of his purposes. The choral odes are of mediocre importance. The play is distinguished chiefly by the delicate art in the dialogue, and the propriety and touching truth of the sentiments. All the situations arise naturally from the characters; and if the tragic effect is on the whole restrained, the action is none the less attractive.

The *Œdipus at Colonus* was produced under the direction of his grandson after the poet's death. The subject is the poet's own; he seems to have obtained it from a local legend of his birthplace under the influence of memories of his childhood. It is the death of the aged Œdipus, who finally sees the end of his sorrows in the sacred grove of the Eumenides at Colonus. He mysteriously disappears there beneath the earth, leaving to the country that had received him the lasting favor of his protection. Although the play has little

action, the poet rouses a lively interest by the portrayal of his hero's character. His misfortunes and dignity, his tender concern for his daughters, his implacable hatred of Creon and of his own son, his gratitude toward Theseus, and his faith in his supernatural destiny, gave him a grandeur sometimes almost sublime. Moreover, the scene of the event, which is Attica, or rather the banks of the Cephissus and the region of Colonus, has a peculiar charm, which is felt both in the dialogues and in the choral odes. Amiable grace is combined with the highest forms of patriotic sentiment.

The seventh of the existing tragedies of Sophocles, the *Trachiniae*, is the most difficult to classify because it is unlike any other. It represents the death of Heracles, brought about involuntarily by the anxious love of Deianira. To assure herself of his fidelity, she caused him to put on a tunic rendered deadly by the blood of Nessus. The play is faulty in that it lacks a leading personage. Deianira is finely portrayed. She is true to life and affecting, but has neither strong will nor passion. She deceives herself in thinking that she acts with prudence, and dies in consequence. Heracles appears only at the end, and then simply as a victim, without influencing the action. The interest is divided between these two personages, without being fully centred in either.

This is what remains of the work of Sophocles. Let us try to get an idea, from the seven tragedies, of the nature of his art and genius.

**3. Innovations of Sophocles: Prominence of Human Interest; Abandonment of the Organic Trilogy; the Third Actor; Resulting Development of the Action.** — The first thing necessary is to determine what his innovations are. This is not always possible in matters of detail; and it will be sufficient here to indicate essentials.

As for the theatre itself, it is in the time of Sophocles, according to Aristotle, that a decided improvement in the decoration of the scenery took place. The plays we have just named must all have been represented before a painted scene showing, in perspective, several views: in the *Antigone*, the royal palace of Thebes; in the *Electra*, that of Mycenæ; in the *Ajax*, first the hero's tent, then a deserted spot near the camp; in the *Œdipus the King*, the palace of Œdipus; in the *Philoctetes*, the hero's grotto and its surroundings; in the *Œdipus at Colonus*, the sacred grove of the Eumenides; and in the *Trachiniae*, the dwelling of Deianira at Trachis. Except for this improvement in the scenery, the general arrangement of the spectacle seems to have remained as it was in the time of Æschylus; only it became still more simple, inasmuch as Sophocles rejected the extrinsic means sometimes employed by his predecessor. He never

used either machinery or great scenic effects. The interest centres more and more in the action itself, in the representation of life.

While Sophocles seemed to be following established traditions, he really conceived the representation in a way peculiar to himself. Æschylus considered dramatic subjects chiefly from a religious point of view: it was his function to show prominently divine action in everything; and if he represented human sentiment, it was under an aspect simple, uniform, unchanging in tendency. In Sophocles, the gods, although still the same and equally powerful, are more remote and less prominent. Man is less crushed by them, though they still lead him to fulfil their purposes; and human nature, displayed more freely, offers a larger field of moral action.

This fundamental difference of conception, due evidently to a thorough transformation of religious sentiment in Athenian society, appears in a significant way in the constitution of the drama. Sophocles, according to Suidas, no longer composed organic trilogy, but only free trilogies, or groups of independent plays. Each tragedy, hereafter, was complete and independent. The very moment, in fact, that the principal theme of the drama ceased to be some great divine volition, continuing from generation to generation, there was no longer any reason for connecting the plays. The representation of a finite purpose did not demand such long developments. Moreover, this transfer of interest implied a search for greater variety. The breaking up of the organic trilogy would only contribute to the desired effect.

Each tragedy, once disconnected from the trilogy as a whole, became somewhat longer; and as the lyric element, at the same time, lost in importance, the dialogue was considerably lengthened. In a way, the introduction of the third actor signalized this change, making it easier to effect and more profitable. The poet had new resources at his disposal, permitting him to give more variety to the action. And, too, the art of composing drama naturally became more easy with longer practice. The result was a structure more complex, abounding more in digressions and surprises, a better marked progress of the action, and fuller concealment of the artifices employed.

Though modified, the action still remained very simple, as compared with that of modern drama. Chance interviews count for almost nothing. The action proceeds chiefly from the play of sentiments; that is, in short, from the will of the personages, whether these are in harmony or in conflict. This in itself is a principle of simplicity. It was essentially the principle of Æschylus. But

Sophocles employed a wider range of sentiments than Æschylus; the varied play of his mind is apparent in his dramas. Then the action, as he conceives it, has for its primary object that of giving to the personages occasion to appear in interesting situations. Considered in itself as a series of events, it sometimes appears slow or episodic. In the *Antigone*, the scenes between the two sisters hardly change the situation, yet they show the elder sister's uncompromising heroism. In the *Electra*, the action, taken up at the beginning with Orestes and his old servant, afterward remains in suspense until the recognition, which comes almost as late as the resolution itself; but all the intervening scenes reveal the heroine's character. In the *Ajax*, the situation of the initial scene continues almost unchanged to the end; but the sentiments and emotions are continually diversified and renewed. The action of the *Œdipus the King* approaches still closer to our ideal. That of the *Philoctetes* and the *Œdipus of Colonus* departs from it again to assume a form that may be called psychological. The other is really the dominant one and characterizes the plays. No doubt he needed, to make a tragedy, either a terrible or a lamentable situation, together with touching incidents; but he tried only in exceptional cases to make the situation change rapidly, or to multiply the events. What he preferred above all was a rich fund of moral elements, furnished by the setting of the subject, such as contrasts, shades of character, or degrees of intensity of passion, which are not superficial nor accidental, but spring from the individuality of the character that they reveal.

**4. The Personage. Ideal Representation of Character. Limited Variety of Will and Sentiment. Moral Tone of the Plays.** — The personages have, therefore, a dramatic life that commands admiration, not only by great, striking impressions, but as material for study, and as increasing constantly in interest with closer observation.

If one considers them as a group, they are remarkable for their variety. Some, especially the protagonists, are strong characters, animated by ardent passion and sustained by a powerful will. But these lofty natures are far from being confused in a single type: one finds among them full-grown men, such as Ajax, King Œdipus, and Philoctetes; old men like the Œdipus who comes to die at Colonus; and young girls such as Antigone or Electra. Each of these creations has its distinctive traits. Other personages, of the second or third order, have a very different moral aspect. The group comprises young girls, timid or prudent, like Ismene or Chrysothemis; young men, frank and ardent, like Hæmon; or generous, but undecided, like Neoptolemus; mature men blindly carrying out their ideas, like Creon in the *Antigone*; clever, like Odysseus in the *Philoctetes*;



proud, harsh, and domineering, like Menelaus or Agamemnon in the *Ajax*; and violent, like Creon in the *Œdipus at Colonus*; also old men, either wise, or irascible like Tiresias in the *Œdipus the King*; women hasty and imprudent, like Iocasta; and superstitious common people, in whom are found, depending on the case one chooses, artlessness and goodness, prudence and devotion, like the guard in the *Antigone*, or the old servant of Laius in the *Œdipus the King*. If one passes in review the various characters found in his dramas, and compares the plays in this respect with those of Æschylus, one is surprised at the difference between the two poets. The new tragedy is the very image of life, while the old was merely a sketch. The gift of representing living personages so as to distinguish them by characterizing them with their proper traits, is certainly the one most worthy of note in Sophocles.

He excels further in opposing these characters to one another. The delicate art of putting them in harmony or contrast is truly his creation. In Æschylus, this was only elementary; Sophocles applied himself to bringing the art to perfection. Sometimes the opposition is fundamental, between personages whose every idea and passion are in conflict, such as Antigone and Creon, Electra and Clytemnestra, Teucer and Menelaus, or Œdipus and Creon in the *Œdipus at Colonus*. But often also there are semi-contrasts, adroitly regulated, and shades of difference between personages who have a common sentiment but who differ over a matter of conduct, such as Antigone and Ismene, Electra and Chrysothemis, Odysseus and Neoptolemus. Strictly speaking, this phase of dramatic art is so fully developed and produces so many distinctions and degrees that it alone would merit detailed study. It must suffice to note here its importance. Nevertheless, beneath the extreme variety, there are traits of resemblance. The trait common to all the characters is a uniform association of truth with proportion and with beauty.

And the characters are endowed with the sentiments of real life. They bear no trace of the conventional or artificial, nothing that arises out of a fashion, nothing due to the theatre. They are literally men like unto ourselves. We say to ourselves, that, if we were in their place, we should have the very same feelings as they. They are truly affecting, since all the emotions and passions of our nature vibrate in their souls and find sincere expression in their language. These emotions and passions doubtless are suited particularly to each one; but, whatever the particular shade or turn, they come from that common source which we find operating in ourselves — from human nature. His portrayal, we say, is regulated by measure, not meaning that, in his plays, all is in restraint, which would be

contrary to the very essence of drama, but that the moderation which he imposed on himself instinctively belongs to life itself. He gives to sentiments the strength that nature would in like circumstances give them, but nothing more. What he eliminates is not violence, when violence is natural, but exaggeration and emphasis. He has no affectation of excess, no search for effect at any price. He eliminates all that, while not necessarily unnatural, is still unworthy of interest, all that makes body predominant over mind, and that offers to the view only a brutal, coarse spectacle, — anger that has swollen to rage, sorrow that has developed into frenzy, and convulsions and spasms of agony. His domain does not properly extend so far. It is the soul that interests him; where that ceases to be evident, there, he thinks, there is nothing worthy of his art to be found.

It would be an exaggeration to say that he shows all the aspects of the soul. What is ugly in it, he leaves out of sight as distasteful. A sentiment must possess a certain beauty before he undertakes to depict it. This again, however, demands explanation. He is not one of those amiable optimists who see the good side of everything, nor of those who attenuate the ugly, thinking to render it beautiful. Many of his personages are unjust, opinionated, even untruthful: they are no strangers to fear, jealousy, anger, prejudice, or hatred. They have perverse sentiments, and the poet is at pains to disclose the fact; for if they were otherwise, they would not be men and would not interest us, or would do so to a less degree. It may even be said that not one of them, including the noblest and best, is altogether good. The admirable person we know in *Antigone* is unjust to Ismene, her sister, and treats her harshly. The aged *Œdipus*, cursing his son, yields to a transport of hatred and resentment which the tears of his daughter at least, if not his paternal sentiment, ought to restrain and temper. The characters go to excess, because they all have human nature in them, and even excess is part of human nature. But if he tends to show the reverse of his better creations, the scruple of truth does not induce him to display on the stage spectacles of physical or moral ugliness. In the whole series of his tragedies not a single character is wholly egotistical and boasts outright. In each one there is at least a more or less voluntary illusion of some quality worthy of commendation. Most of them are honest in their sentiments, or even generous. Those of the first order yield always to a certain general nobility. Pride, uprightness, devotion to an ideal, sincerity, self-sacrifice, and a lofty sentiment of duty, — these he loves to depict; these, in the end, are what one finds prominent in his plays.

His idealism, however, is not rigid or strained. He is one of the great poets of the affections and of human tenderness. In each of his dramas, he sets forth the need of affection at the bottom of the human heart. Antigone, when she braves Creon, is all love and pity. Electra, in the sombre meditation of the past in which she sinks her thought, has at heart the adoration of her father. She bursts into tears over the urn of Orestes; she opens her heart in infinite effusion when she clasps her brother in her arms. Ajax, stern Ajax, when he dies, grows tender over the thought of his son, of his country beyond the sea, and of his aged parents. Œdipus, overwhelmed by destiny, finds solace in weeping with his daughters, embracing them, and giving way to his sorrow. Philoctetes is delighted by the sound of his mother tongue, and pleased with the thought of his old friends. All the characters keep the texture of their human nature well, despite their transient hardships. They are no more stoic than rhetorical; they are men in the fullest sense of the term.

Thus there is not less dramatic variety in each of the tragedies than in the group they compose when brought together. But it is subject to restraining laws; and these should be explained here.

No poet understood better that Greek tragedy, limited in the number of its actors and in its extent, if it tried to give equal importance to all the characters, would fail to study any one completely. To avoid being superficial or weak, it resolutely sacrificed the characters of second or third order to the protagonists. This does not mean that it made them insignificant or void of character; far from it. We have just seen, on the contrary, how true to life and how interesting most of them are. But the rôle they play is never sufficient, nor sufficiently independent, to permit their displaying their whole nature. One must discern it, rather than know it thoroughly. They appear only in the particular aspect necessary for the action and for bringing out the character of the protagonist. Hence in them there can never be real variation of character. Generally the variations are only sketched. Neoptolemus alone forms, to a certain extent, an exception to the rule; and even in him, the variations, however interesting, are not brought into prominence nor dramatized as they would be if he formed the principal character of the tragedy.

It is, therefore, only among protagonists that we may expect to find internal conflicts, great fluctuations, or reconsideration of purposes. But here the poet appears to have been restrained by a scruple of a different order. Like Æschylus, he probably thought that the first requisite of a truly heroic character was that it should not contradict itself. Constancy in important decisions and great,

characteristic resolutions appeared to him the most indispensable element in the ideals he had conceived. Accordingly, his characters of the first order never waver in their conduct. Antigone, Electra, Ajax, Œdipus the King, Philoctetes, Œdipus at Colonus, all, therefore, continue from beginning to end unmoved either in their purposes or in their decisions, unalterable in their fundamental passion. The very natural variety they have is due to their emotions, which undergo incessant modification, and to the secondary sentiments that spring up around the principal one—to the finely graduated shades of difference in the aspects of their wills. They fear or hope, grow gentle or bold, pray or curse, restrain themselves or grow exasperated, according to circumstance. But never do they come into conflict with themselves, seriously doubt their judgments, question themselves anxiously, or reconsider. Struggles of conscience or sorrowful hesitation, which form the dramatic beauty of such characters as Hamlet, Augustus, or Hermione, will be seen appearing sometimes in Euripides, but nowhere in Sophocles. This seems to be the effect of a conception well thought out which is both æsthetic and moral.

Yet these strong wills are much more human than in Æschylus, not only because they are more varied in tone, but also because they are more permeated with reason. The motives to action are always illuminated by the free, deliberate choice of the principal character, and equally by the contradictions he meets and the discussions in which he participates. Hence the moral tone of the plays is clearer than in Æschylus. True, they often end in showing the futility of human reason. Creon in the *Antigone*, and Œdipus the King are famous examples of what has been called tragic irony. They strive to act with prudence, they regulate their conduct by plausible motives, they act in accordance with apparently decisive principles of conduct, yet hasten to their ruin. One would think that behind the theatre there is a hidden power, mocking men, seizing them in the decoy of their own reason, and leading them whither it will. Doubtless this idea was not so repugnant to his religious belief as to our philosophy. But, without in the least denying the irony, it must not be overlooked that, owing to the truly human character of the action, it has less disturbing harshness than sometimes in Æschylus. Œdipus is an innocent victim, but his misfortune does not alter his nobility of spirit nor his dignity. The poet has so brought these to light that they continue to seem like an inalienable good. We pity him profoundly and at the same time admire him. So, besides the traditional conception, which still continues, there appears something new, a human morality, founded on uprightness



of purpose, on reason and conscience, on the immanent beauty of all that is good. This can be discerned already in the *Œdipus the King*, and is still more manifest in the *Œdipus at Colonus*.

**5. The Chorus; its Rôle. The Lyric Passages.**<sup>1</sup>—The great development of dramatic action which characterized the work of Sophocles necessarily limited still more the importance of the chorus. This had been already diminished by Æschylus. It is true that, far from neglecting the chorus, he endeavored to make the best use of it possible. He is said to have increased the number of choreutes from twelve to fifteen. Doubtless he thus obtained effects in the evolutions of the chorus more satisfactory to the eye, and also more pleasing chants. But it is undeniable that the lyric passages have no longer the amplitude they sometimes have in Æschylus.

In none of his dramas, however, does the chorus play the active part which Æschylus gave it in the *Suppliants* and again, toward the end of his life, in the *Eumenides*. Yet it is just as intimately connected with the action. The poet always found some natural sentiment in which the chorus could take a real interest. What he most demanded of it was ready impressions which would permit mobility of treatment. Lofty theological expressions no longer have much place; but from act to act, the chorus expresses frankly and forcibly the feelings of the moment, the suggestions of the situation, its fears, its hopes, sometimes its admiration, or, still more often, a restrained censure of what has seemed too bold. It has, in general, deep sympathy with human weakness, joined with religious apprehension of the jealousy of the gods; and therefore the taste for moderation is more mature. Thus it furnishes the poet an excellent contrast with the temerity and rashness of the protagonist.

Considered as a lyric poet, Sophocles has equally great merit. If he has not the pomp, majesty, or supernatural grandeur of Æschylus, he has a nobility and charm that are never wanting. Brilliant grace, easy movement, force and remarkable plenitude of thought, are at the service of his abundant, yet reserved, imagination. Dio Chrysostom, speaking of his choral odes, praises their "enchanting suavity and grandeur" (*ἡδονὴν θαυμαστὴν καὶ μεγαλοπρέπειαν*, *Disc.* LVI). There is no better language to convey our impression. We know from the account of Aristophanes (*Pax*, 531) what pleasure the Athenian people found in hearing them. This we can still

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Müff. *Die chorische Technik des Sophokles*. Halle, 1877; O. Hense. *Der Chor des Sophokles*. Berlin, 1877; Masqueray. *Théorie*, etc., *sup. cit.*

experience as we read the plays, even though they have been de spoiled of their melody.

**6. Sophocles as a Writer. His Influence.**—The deep charm that he exercised over his contemporaries was due evidently to a large array of harmonious qualities manifest in every department of his art, and reflected in his style.

As a writer, he seems to have tried to attain the nobility of Æschylus, though softening and attenuating it to make it more expressive of real life. According to an expression of his preserved by Plutarch (*Progress in Virtue*, c. 7), he was conscious toward the close of his life of steady improvement in this respect. It is difficult for us to judge of the matter, owing to the small number of plays we possess, particularly in the absence of a certain chronology. But in general, the characteristic of his talent as a writer is force associated with ease and grace. His language is concise and bold; it gives words an original meaning without doing them violence, making them stronger in the expression of thought and sentiment. Yet he does not need, like Æschylus, to depart from current usage. Reserved in the use of compound words, he is ever inventive of figures and word-groups. His style is spirited, generally clear in construction, yet terse, almost exempt from formal rhetoric, and closely following the trend of thought. It traces the progress of the thought with readiness; consequently it is free, though orderly. The lyric passages no longer have the slight monotony met with in Æschylus, and are superior in poetic quality to those of Euripides, which sometimes resemble prose too closely. Combining naturalness with dignity, the style is much varied in tone, now harsh, violent, and passionate, now appropriate to the lifelike dialectic of the drama, and now so gentle that it seems to sigh in expressions of sorrow and tenderness. It is preëminently the style of tragedy, as Athens conceived it and loved to have it represented.

His part in the history of Greek tragedy may seem, when one reflects upon it, inferior to his genius. The great inventions constituting tragic drama had been already realized and needed only to be perfected. On the other hand, his direct influence on succeeding generations seems to have been less than that of Euripides. This is also due, in part, to his very merits. His tragedy was too harmonious, and its composition too perfect, to be easily imitated; besides, it was still imbued with a form of religion and morality that was to be sensibly modified. Hence he was less imitated than Euripides by the peoples who came under the influence of Hellenism. But it would be a narrow manner of estimating his influence to consider it only from this point of view. The influence of a great poet cannot

be measured simply by the number of imitators he may obtain. It consists chiefly in the ideals which he calls into existence in the hearts of men. Whoever comes near perfection in any type of art thereby makes himself one of the masters of the human mind; and, if we so judge, it must appear to us that of all the poets of antiquity none has a clearer right to be considered such a master.

## CHAPTER XIII

### EURIPIDES. COMPLETE EVOLUTION OF TRAGEDY

1. Rôle of Euripides. His Life and Character. His Genius.
2. His Activity. The Extant Plays.
3. New Conception of Drama. Variety and Pathos. Nature of the Action. Prologues and Resolutions.
4. His Characters. Will and Passion. Realism and Idealism. Contemporary Society in his Plays.
5. The Lyric Passages.
6. His Style.
7. Completion of the Period of Tragedy.

**1. Rôle of Euripides. His Life and Character. His Genius.**<sup>1</sup>—Younger than Sophocles by only fifteen years, Euripides competed with him for more than half a century. He died a year earlier than Sophocles, and so was approximately of the same generation. But, if we judge by their works, there would seem to be a considerable difference of time between them. Sophocles clung respectfully to tradition even in his innovations; Euripides followed it when he could not do otherwise, though all his instincts tended the other way. In religion, philosophy, politics, and art, he was an independent character, whom no hereditary tendencies could fully hold in check. In his hands tragedy was modified even in its essential elements. It lost every trace of the antique which till then it had preserved, and became more and more modern.

Born in 480 at Salamis, he appears to have belonged neither to the aristocracy, like Æschylus, nor to the upper middle class, like Sophocles. We are uninformed as to the rank of his parents—for we cannot accept the statement of comedy on the point. He was probably not of high origin. His ancestors left him no inheritance that could attach him to the past. He probably received the education usual to young Athenians; but everything goes to show that after he had grown to manhood, he completed it for himself. Probably he owed his high intellectual culture to his reading and his personal reflection, possibly also to frequent interviews with certain distinguished men. He is represented as living a meditative life alone; and this, too, is evident in all his works. So it is hardly probable that he had

<sup>1</sup> PRINCIPAL SOURCES: Five anonymous *Lives* in Westermann, *Vitarum Scriptores*, and in the leading editions of Euripides.

Consult: The article by Nauck in the front of his edition of Euripides, Teubner Collection; P. Decharme, *Euripide et l'Esprit de son théâtre*, Paris, 1893.



any regular teachers. Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, and Prodicus, who are cited as such, certainly exercised an influence over him; but there is no reason to believe that it took the form of oral transmission of doctrines. He made one of the first great collections of books of which there is any record. It is through books that most of the ideas of the day must have reached him.

He hesitated, it is said, over the choice of his career. We read, in the anonymous *Life*, that he first wished to be an athlete, then a painter. There is, however, nothing certain about the matter. He seems to have made his appearance at the theatre early. In 455, at the age of twenty-five, he was given permission to compete in the tragic contest with a trilogy that included the *Daughters of Pelias*; but he obtained only the third prize. From 455 until his death, in 406, he seldom failed to compete. The leading dates of his dramatic career are marked by the *Alcestis* (438), the *Medea* (431), the *Hippolytus Crowned* (428), the *Troades* (415), the *Helena* (412), the *Orestes* (408), the *Iphigenia at Aulis* and the *Bacchæ*, which were represented in 405, a year after his death. His success was mediocre at first. His first victory was in 440; he won only four others in the thirty-four years that followed. This proves that his works at first astonished the Athenian public and gained favor but slowly. He did not become thoroughly popular and master of public opinion till after his death.

Owing to a taste for study, a disdain of honors, or some other motive, he constantly held aloof from public affairs. His private life, it is said, was troubled by domestic unhappiness. At an advanced age, he retired from Athens to live with the Magnetes; then at the court of Pella, with Archelaus, king of Macedon, who received him with magnificence. He died there in 406, at the age of seventy-five, leaving three sons. The youngest, who bore his name, was also a poet. Archelaus had a monument erected to him in Macedon, in the vale of Arethusa; Athens, deprived of his remains, could only consecrate to him a cenotaph. But in the next century she set up his statue together with those of Æschylus and Sophocles in the theatre of Dionysus, which was completed under the care of the orator Lycurgus.

Inconstant and impressionable by nature, endowed with instincts and faculties sometimes in contradiction, Euripides has a character more difficult to summarize than that of Æschylus or Sophocles. A ready, even slightly feminine sensibility, full sympathy with all natural affection, the simplest, tenderest gift of pathos, and withal a charming imagination, full of grace, sweetness, and fancy—these are the poet's essential gifts. But poetry alone was far from en-

grossing his attention. He had an extreme curiosity of mind, which led him to touch on all sorts of questions; everything interested and appealed to him — nature, society, humanity. He loved to interrogate himself and others about the most diverse problems. Independent and easily influenced, traditional answers rarely satisfied him; but ingenious views and systems apparently allured him. His intelligence was ready, penetrating, hardy, even hasty, prompt to raise doubts and see the weak side of things. It is doubtful whether he had enough vigor or firmness to form a doctrine of his ideas or, in any event, to adhere to such a doctrine. He was rather a thinker than a philosopher, rather an investigator than a dogmatist. His incessant mental activity sometimes took the form of mere sport. This is a hindrance to a poet. His work at times temporarily lost in seriousness and sincerity. He had a liking for paradox, for brilliant, but useless, dissertation, for unnecessary wit. But when his finesse and clear insight were brought to bear on the obscure recesses of the human heart, they showed him to be singularly well informed. In short, though less grand than Æschylus, and less harmonious than Sophocles, he atoned in part for his inferiority by the variety of his merits, particularly his generosity, the infinite richness of his emotions, and the keenest sense of human weakness.

**2. His Activity. The Extant Plays.**<sup>1</sup> — The number of plays attributed to him, including tragedies and satyr-dramas, varies according to accounts from seventy-five to ninety-two. Only nineteen are preserved. These include a satyr-drama, the *Cyclops*; and one tragedy, the *Rhesus*, which is certainly not his. He composed also some elegiac or lyric poems. Authorities cite particularly a dirge for the Athenians who died in Sicily and a triumphal ode in honor of Alcibiades when he was victor in the Olympic games. We have only a short fragment of each of these two compositions. The remains of his lost tragedies are numerous; many fragments are maxims or short dissertations that have a vivid poetic and moral interest. But they come far short of enabling us either to restore the general

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: G. Dindorf, *Euripidis Tragædiæ et Fragmenta*, 7 vols., with excursus, notes, and scholia, Oxford, 1834-1863; Kirchhoff, *Euripidis Fabulæ*, 3 vols., Berlin, 1867-1868; Fix, *Euripidis Fabulæ*, with Latin translation, Paris, Didot, 1843; H. Weil, *Sept Tragédies d'Euripide*, with an introduction and notes, Paris, Hachette, 1878; Nauck, *Euripidis Tragædiæ*, with the fragments, 3 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1st ed., 1854. The fragments are published in the Didot collection, together with those of the other tragic poets, by Wagner and Dübner. English edition with notes by F. A. Paley, London, 1860-1874. Translation into English verse by A. S. Way, 3 vols., London and New York, 1894-1898; *Alcestis, Medea, Hippolytus*, in verse, by William C. Lawton, Boston, 1889.

Consult the works of Welcker, Patin, Weil, *sup. cit.*, p. 185. A suggestive essay is *Euripides the Rationalist* by A. W. Verrall, London and New York, 1895.

structure of the lost plays or even to discern their subjects with certainty. The most important ones come from the tragedies entitled *Æolus*, *Antiope*, *Bellerophon*, *Erechtheus*, *Phaethon*, and *Philoctetes*. In general, he appears to have preferred the secondary to the great events of epic, and to have treated them very freely. What chiefly determined his choice was the pathos of the subject. He sought for situations as violent as possible, or as rich as possible in passion and suffering. Such are the characteristics of most of the extant plays.

Eight can be referred to definite dates. They are, in chronological order:—

The *Alcestis* (438) was brought out as a satyr-drama. Alcestis, wife of King Admetus of Thessaly, consents to die in his stead, and is buried; but Heracles, snatching her away from Thanatos, the genius of death, restores her to her husband. The role of Alcestis is one of the most touching that Euripides created. That of Admetus sometimes borders on serious comedy, as does also that of his father Pheres. Heracles, as in the satyr-drama, is a hero, and at the same time a buffoon. The play requires only two actors.

The *Medea* (431) has for its subject the vengeance of Medea, when abandoned by Jason, who wishes to marry the daughter of the king of Corinth. In rage she causes the death of her rival, and then slays her own children. Neophron of Sicyon had already written a play on the same subject; but Euripides succeeded better in painting Medea's sombre fury, her dissimulation, the conflict in her heart, and the savage ecstasy that triumphs there over her maternal affection. Nothing is more beautiful than the monologue preceding the murder.

‡ The *Hippolytus Crowned*, Ἰππόλυτος στεφανίης (428), is a recasting of the *Hippolytus Veiled*, the date of which is unknown. Young Hippolytus, son of Theseus and the Amazon Antiope, is the object of the incestuous love of Phædra, his mother-in-law. He rejects her; and Phædra, overcome with shame, kills herself. Theseus, deceived by a calumnious denunciation which she has left behind, is convinced of the guilt of Hippolytus. He drives him from home with curses, calling down on him the wrath of Poseidon. Hippolytus perishes: but before dying, he makes his father aware of his innocence and pardons him. The rôle of Hippolytus, which is the first in importance, has been rightly praised for its somewhat savage pride, its ingenuous grace, and its nobility. That of Phædra is remarkable for the strength of its passion, for its painting of a delirium which deceives the imagination and deludes the will, for the inner contradictions of a heart that does and does not wish. One only regrets that, in reducing her to a minor rank, Euripides denied himself the

means of developing her character as it deserved. In the first *Hippolytus*, he had represented it more boldly; his boldness proved offensive; in correcting himself, he rejected a dramatic effect of which, later on, Seneca and Racine availed themselves.

The *Troades* (415) is less a tragedy, strictly speaking, than a series of pathetic scenes of great beauty, in which Euripides has grouped about the personage of Hecuba some of the most touching episodes of the day following the capture of Troy, such as the allotment of the captives, the delirium of Cassandra, and the death of Astyanax.

The *Helena* (412) is based on a singular theme that goes back at least as far as the *Palinode* of Stesichorus. Helen, in Euripides, was transposed by Hermes to Egypt; whereas Paris, being deceived, took to Troy only her phantom. After the capture of Troy, Menelaus, driven by winds to the coast of Egypt, found there his wife, at the moment when the king of the country, Theoclymenes, wished to marry her. Menelaus and Helen recognized each other, deceived the king by a ruse, and succeeded finally in escaping, owing to the intervention of the Dioscuri. Despite the improbability of these adventures, the play was interesting on account of the charm of Helen's rôle.

The *Orestes* (408) has for its subject the judgment of the parricide Orestes by the people of Argos. Here again the invention of incidents is somewhat romantic. There is brought before us a plot by which Orestes, Electra, and Pylades become masters of the palace and force their adversaries to submit to their conditions. The finest scenes are in the beginning, where we see Orestes sick, and carefully attended by his sister Electra. We are witnesses of his delirium. In the sequel, Euripides almost plays the part of a satiric poet, when he represents, on the one hand, scenes of a trial where the life of the accused is in the hands of the democracy, and the caprice of the people may do what it will; and on the other, the recklessness of political characters, typified by Menelaus.

In the *Iphigenia at Aulis* (405), Euripides again treated the legend of the sacrifice of Iphigenia already adopted by Æschylus and Sophocles. He modified only the solution, supposing that the young girl was rescued by Artemis, who put under the sacrificial knife a deer in her stead. In the depiction of sentiment, this is one of his finest tragedies. Iphigenia is brought prominently forward. She moves the spectator deeply by her grace, filial devotion, simplicity, attachment to life, supplications, and heroism. By her side is Agamemnon, sorrowfully hesitating, true to life even in his weakness; Clytemnestra, defiant, entreating, angry, threatening by turns; and Achilles.



proud, generous, ready to begin a combat, though without hope of success.

The *Bacchæ* (405 also) treats the resistance of Pentheus, king of Thebes, to the establishment of the Dionysiac cult; and also his punishment. The dramatic effect results chiefly from the contrast between the blindness of young Pentheus, full of scorn for an alien superstition which he treats with madness and folly, and the hidden power of the god, which appears in the mystic exaltation of his worshippers, in his haughty, ironic serenity, and in the frightful death of Pentheus, who is torn to pieces by the hands of his own mother. Contrary to his usual practice, the poet has adopted without protest the spirit of an enthusiastic devotee, which is the spirit of his theme.

The other nine extant plays are of uncertain date, but almost all of them appear to come from the period of the Peloponnesian War, and so from the latter part of the poet's career.

The *Andromache* dates apparently from the beginning of this period. We see that Hector's widow has become the slave of Neoptolemus, and has borne him a son. In her master's absence, she is threatened by Hermione, the real wife of the son of Achilles. The strife of the two women, and the intervention of old Peleus, who saves Andromache, form the subject of the drama. Notwithstanding some pretty scenes, it must rank in the second class of the poet's plays.

The *Hecuba*, probably from the same, or almost the same, epoch, is much superior in dramatic interest. The poet has here united two themes: the death of Polyxena, who is immolated on the tomb of Achilles; and the vengeance wrought by Hecuba on Polymestor, king of Thrace, the murderer of the youngest son she bore to Priam. The first part of the play is admirable for the pathetic picture of her supplications and the heroism of Polyxena.

The *Electra* would appear to belong to a period earlier than that of the *Helena*. Euripides has taken up the theme of the *Choëphoræ* of Æschylus and the *Electra* of Sophocles, though adding a romantic element. The scene is transferred to the home of a peasant in the country, who is, though in name only, Electra's husband. The poet seems, by his choice of details, to increase deliberately the odious elements already in the legend, as if to condemn the crime more severely by its very horror, though it is committed at the command of the gods.

The *Heracleidæ* manifestly belongs to the time of the Peloponnesian War. The poet recalls the debt of gratitude which Argos owed to Athens, because the latter protected the children of Heracles

against Eurystheus, their persecutor. Being dominated by a political purpose, the play is wanting in live, deep sentiment.

The *Hercules Furens* (though it might better be called the *Madness of Heracles*) is a rather confused tragedy, which contains, however, powerful dramatic effects. Heracles, having gone to Hades, comes back just in time to save his old father and his wife and children from death at the hands of the usurper Lycus. The latter has just been slain, when madness seizes Heracles, the slayer, who then massacres his whole family except his father, and recovers his reason only to learn the nature of his unhappy act.

The *Suppliants* is a play written for an occasion, and must have been composed about 420. Its dramatic value is mediocre. The mothers of the Argive chiefs who fell before Thebes come to implore the help of Athens in getting possession of the bodies of their sons, as the conquerors refuse to bury them. Theseus undertakes to maintain the sacred rights of the dead, defeats the Thebans, and pays the last honors to the fallen.

The *Iphigenia in Taurica* must date from the last years of the poet's life. It is one of his best tragedies. Iphigenia, transported to Taurica by Artemis, and there consecrated to her bloody rites by Thoas, the king of the country, is on the point of immolating her brother Orestes, whom an oracle has induced to go to that desert coast. They recognize each other and succeed in escaping together. One admires in the play the adroit conduct of the action and the delicate painting of sentiment.

The *Ion*, whose date is difficult to fix even approximately, is a play of much merit. The subject is the adoption of young Ion, son of Apollo and Creusa, by Achaëus, king of Athens, who has espoused the latter. There is profound charm in the part of the young man of unknown origin, devoted to the cult of Apollo; and the poet has been able to represent the recognition between mother and son in a series of very touching scenes.

The *Phœnissæ* belongs to the last part of the poet's residence at Athens. It is an ample composition, centring in the fratricidal strife between Eteocles and Polynices, which was treated by Æschylus in the *Seven*. Euripides has enriched it with various episodes. The chief beauty of the play is in the rôle of Iocasta and the admirable narratives leading up to the catastrophe.

Such are the extant tragedies of Euripides. The *Rhesus*, of which we shall speak later on, is certainly not his. To the tragedies must be added a satyr-drama, the *Cyclops*, in which he has represented, with much charm and piquant originality, the adventure of Odysseus and the Cyclops as told in the Ninth Book of the *Odyssey*.

In addition to its own merit, the drama is of special interest in that it is the only complete specimen we have of this curious literary type.

**3. New Conception of Drama. Variety and Pathos. Nature of the Action. Prologues and Solutions.**<sup>1</sup> — Euripides does not seem to have introduced any important feature into the material organization of tragedy, nor into the manner of its representation on the stage, as Æschylus and Sophocles had done. In this respect, traditions were fixed when he began his career, and probably he did not try to make changes. Nevertheless, he modified very considerably the conception of the character of drama; and that, too, perhaps unintentionally, following the natural tendencies of his mind.

Tragedy could not be for him, as for Æschylus, the representation, from a religious point of view, of a great legendary event. He may not have repudiated openly the current ideas as to the influence of the gods in human affairs. Doubtless he often put into the mouths of his personages, in the course of the action, the words of a free thinker, expressive of his own personal opinions. He might even take pains to call up in the mind of the spectators a secret protest against the religious data of the legend. But these he really was obliged to accept; for they were part, so to speak, of the form of composition that he used. It was not in the power of any one to compose, at Athens in the fifth century, a tragedy wholly non-religious and philosophic. So Euripides, even from a religious point of view, followed tradition, except in certain details. But there is a great difference between this forced submission and the hearty enthusiasm of an Æschylus; and it is very clear that, with such a disposition, the poet could not regard with pleasure the decrees of destiny, nor strive to make their power manifest. If the gods were very busy in his theatre — if they intervened as much or more than in any other — it cannot be denied that they were often capricious, or what is worse, insignificant. In many cases they serve only to facilitate the solution; and almost never does a truly religious interest call forth their action.

Nor has he conceived of tragedy, like Sophocles, as the normal development of a will or a character in a definite situation. Such a fashion of treating legendary subjects implies methodical, sustained reflection, pains to secure harmony, the subordination of particular incidents to the general theme; and this was not his nature. It would almost certainly result in sacrificing variety more or less to unity; and variety was one of the things which appealed to him most strongly.

<sup>1</sup> Consult: The works of Patin and Decharme, *sup. cit.*; and the essay of H. Weil, *Sept Tragedies*, etc., *sup. cit.*

His drama is, in fact, as varied as possible, considering the small number of actors and the mediocre resources of the Greek theatre. Instead of prolonging a situation, he prefers to modify it with unexpected events, to diversify it with episodes, or to renew it by added incidents. Almost always, when all three use the same legend as a basis, the plays of Æschylus, and still oftener those of Sophocles, are virtually included in his first act. Those of Euripides enlarge and branch out as scene succeeds scene. The variety he seeks allows the employment of many dramatic elements. The chief one is pathos; in general, he seizes, in each situation, only the most affecting moments. From the beginning he confines himself to strong passion or strong suffering; when he has exhausted these, he seeks others. Hence certain of his plays, such as the *Hecuba* or the *Troades*, really contain several subjects. In default of passions or sufferings, he wishes to have discussions permitting him to plead forlorn causes. Discussions seem to delight him. Finally, all ingenious combinations — misunderstandings, meetings between persons each unaware of the other's presence, unexpected incidents, revelations of secrets, recognitions, in a word, the whole list of possible artifices — seem to have held a much more important place in his esteem than in that of his predecessors.

The tragedy thus produced is often quite affecting. It surprises and it captivates. But the vivid impressions it produces conceal but imperfectly, one must admit, the fact that it is biassed and sometimes quite unfair. Aristotle remarked this inherent mixture of merits and defects, when he said in his *Poetics* (c. 13), "Although Euripides composes ill, he is the most tragic of poets."

The structure of his plays, under the influence of the habits and tendencies just noted, presents some peculiarities. One of the most important is the employment of narrative prologues, uttered by an isolated actor before the play itself commences. This is the most rudimentary form of exposition imaginable; it is not found in Sophocles, except in the *Trachinæ*, and never in Æschylus. It is almost regular in Euripides, and answers various purposes, now singly, now in combinations. 1 It is a way of giving an introductory idea of the opening scenes. When once the indispensable explanations are given, the poet can proceed at once to the touching elements of the drama; and these preliminary explanations are the more necessary as he treats the legends more freely and complicates the situations more. 2 It is also a means of connecting beforehand episodes somewhat loosely bound together. By announcing them simultaneously to the spectator, he gives them an appearance of unity. 3 Sometimes it is a convenient device to notify the public of a divine action which,



though necessary to the subject, the drama itself would not lead one to expect. Another peculiarity, no less curious, is the employment of the *Deus ex machina* to close the play. He has no scruple about using it, though it seems to us rather crude and commonplace, and is never used by Æschylus and almost never by Sophocles. For him it had the advantage of showing consequences of an action which were still concealed in the future, and also of assigning to the gods the part that public opinion demanded — a part that he had not always given them in the drama itself. But above all, he was able thus to close his play in the very crisis of its pathos, since the final calm was produced brusquely under the influence of a supernatural power enforcing its will. Herein is shown again his fondness for the pathetic scene which appealed to him so strongly, rather than for the normal development of sentiments.

**4. The Characters. Will and Passion. Realism and Idealism. Contemporary Society in his Plays.** — From what has been said, it is evident that one must not demand from him complete and methodical studies of dramatic psychology. There is scarcely an example in all his work of characters who reveal to us in the course of the action all their essential traits. The poet gives us simply a few views of their moral nature. He shows them to us in states of violent though temporary feeling. We see Phædra a prey to the passion that destroys her, but scarcely know, from the few words thrown out in passing, how the passion grew up, what resistance her will offered to it, and what path she followed amid her contrary sentiments. Hippolytus has some interesting and original traits; but his action, though wholly defensive, does not suffice to develop or coördinate them. Heecuba is admirable for her maternal affection when she is defending her daughter; she is quite different, however, in taking vengeance on Polymestor; and then, it must be owned, her savage fury accords but ill with the artless sorrow that so affects our hearts. Agamemnon interests our curiosity in a very human mixture of ambition and paternal tenderness, weakness and grandeur. But he is simply sketched; and when the decisive crisis comes to reveal to us his soul, he is gone. Young victims like Iphigenia and Polyxena charm us by their grace, dignity, and heroism. But the poet does not give us occasions enough to know them so we can really learn their character. When they go away to death we have scarcely seen them. Medea, almost alone, appears as an exception. Still, it continues true that the poet has not had a definite idea of her character. We are not told whether she still has an involuntary love for Jason, with the furious hatred that she evinces toward him; and we really find difficulty in under-

standing how one so forlorn as she can take thought for personal security.

The truth is that Euripides interests us less in well-considered decisions than in instinctive sentiment and passion. What he paints by choice and paints well is the hidden forces that act half unconsciously within us. His great types of amorous women gave offence in the Athenian theatre. Never were the mysterious workings of human nature so boldly unveiled. In Phædra and Medea, irresistible forces seem to arise from the depths of the physical and moral nature — forces that will and reason disavow, yet against which they struggle feebly. It is not merely passion that, with him, is so instinctive; but also affection, sentiment, and even heroism. A deed of heroism is never anticipated, as in Sophocles, long beforehand; it does not result from fully comprehended principles, from laws imposed by the conscience of the character; but it is done suddenly, when circumstances make it necessary; and sometimes in consequence, the character does not seem as real as might be desired.

These reflections help us to understand the importance given to young persons and to women. A painter by instinct, he was naturally attached rather to impulsive natures than to those in whom, as a rule, moral force is supposed to be predominant. In the delicate representation of ingenuous character, he had no predecessor; nor has he ever been surpassed.

His real manner consists in a charming and very affecting mixture of realism and idealism. Notwithstanding tradition, and without fear of disturbing tragic dignity, he ventured to direct attention to the details of real life, which an art more regardful of the majestic would have designedly passed by. Sometimes, indeed, he has chanced to fall into the commonplace. Aristophanes reproached him with seeking to move his public by coarse means, and displaying before it the material accompaniments of misery and suffering, such as rags, infirmities, and the outward marks of age. The criticism is justified by more than one detail in the extant plays; but it would be quite unjust to exaggerate its importance. When the poet has a humble servant, in *Alcestis*, describe the queen's last moments as she runs to and fro in her house, touching familiar objects for the last time, weeping over her nuptial couch, then tenderly addressing her children and saying a few words to each of her servants, it is realism, without doubt, yet excellent. He does show us petty things and familiar details; but they are the most natural means for expressing noble sentiment here, and accordingly his novel realism is at the service of an exquisite idealism.

Sometimes, taking quite another form, the tendency turns more

or less to satire; and in this aspect, perhaps it is more open to censure as an element of tragedy, but it is at least singularly interesting. Euripides attacks especially the faults of women. No one in the theatre has criticised them oftener or more sharply, though it must be acknowledged that he is far from being always right in doing so. His contemporaries attributed to him an implacable hatred of women. They certainly mistook his true sentiments. We have just seen that, though criticising them sharply, he also portrayed their virtues. Furthermore, his satire was not exercised uniquely against them. Like all impressionable natures, he had a keen sense of the wicked and the ridiculous, and did not check the pleasure he took in giving vent to his humor with the means at his disposal. His plays offer, besides great ideal figures, many personages that are egotistic, lax, basely ambitious, harsh, and perfidious. The vices which Sophocles concealed, or covered with an envelope of passion, Euripides frankly displayed; so that those who possess them often profess the fact. A sort of crude frankness is not rare on their part. When they do not themselves avow the passions, other personages bring them to light. There can be no doubt that this is lifelike painting of contemporary society. The development of the democracy, the fierce strife between individual interests, perhaps also the influence of the sophists, had sensibly altered the ancient ideal of aristocratic, traditional dignity. Politicians, orators, demagogues, ambitious persons without honor, had risen in multitudes. Less and less respect was paid to loyalty, the bonds of friendship or family affection, and the delicate shades of certain particularly fragile virtues, such as gratitude. This is just the state of things he brings out in almost all his plays. Thus treated, tragedy often approaches the more serious types of comedy — those which seek less to produce a laugh than to show defects or caprices. And under his influence, such comedy was in the course of the next century to become current in Greece.

**5. The Lyric Passages.**<sup>1</sup> — There is no cause for dwelling on the lyric passages of tragedy thus transformed. The chants of the chorus tended more and more to separate themselves from the action. Probably the poet still tried to attach them by a sensible tie; but it is evident that he shows more artifice than sincerity. These chants do not arise out of the theme of the dialogue; they are not inspired by great emotions which the action has produced; and they no longer seek to disengage, so to speak, the truths of religious and moral philosophy. Very often they are mere fantasies relative to the action. Hence, in general, it must be owned that they lack

<sup>1</sup> Consult, in addition to the works already noticed in this chapter, that of Masqucray, *Théorie*, etc., *sup. cit.*

grandeur and force, and scarcely contribute to the effects of terror and pity proper to tragedy. Yet, with this reservation, there is reason for praising their grace, their varied charm, and their exquisite imagery. A love of nature is often mingled in them with discreet emotion, and the effect produced is delightful. Let us cite, at least, as a single example, the pretty ode of the *Helena*, where young Greek girls are describing the sea calmed for the return of Menelaus, and then imagine themselves flying through space like birds of passage returning to their mother country (*Helena*, 1451):—

“O Phœnician vessel, light bark of Sidon, with thy lovely oars make the waves of Nereus rustle. Lead the gay chorus of dolphins, when no breeze disturbs the surface of the sea, when the child of Pontus, blue-eyed Galanea, says: ‘Spread your sails wide, abandoning them to the ocean breeze; and take your oars of fir, sailors. O sailors, to bring back Helen to a hospitable shore, to the land of the sons of Perseus.’ Ah! Through the air, would we might take our flight like flocks of birds, fleeing from Libya in the season of rain. They go, obeying the song of the eldest, who guides them by flight and voice to plains that are dry and fertile. O winged band, long-necked, feathery rivals of the clouds, go, at the rising of the Pleiades and of Orion, those groups so bright in the darkness, carry to Eurotas the news that Menelaus has captured the city of Dardanus, and is now returning home.”

One feels here the true character of this poetry, where easy, graceful imagination sports with the details, accumulating and tossing off pretty images through a long period, somewhat playfully, yet nimbly, imitative of the waves of water. There are not many thoughts beneath the undulations, but there is the charm of cleverness and of variety of design.

Yet the poet’s philosophic turn is seen also here and there in his choral chants. Then he comes in without taking the trouble to disguise his personality and enunciates some of those general thoughts of which he is so fond, and which give his poetry a didactic character. He informs us of his meditations, and of what he has read or observed; and this, coming from the lips of old men or women, whom he uses as his interpreters, only causes surprise. But it does not hinder such passages, considered in themselves, from having a deeply impressive, stately beauty.

Besides the choral odes, his plays often include as lyric passages a large number of chanted monologues or monodies. Though rare till then, these are frequent in his tragedies. Our appreciation of them is, in general, only imperfect. Designed to give range to the voice or diction of an actor, they depended much on the melody which accompanied the words, and on the action, for the favor of their



auditors. In these monodies, the poet performed functions like those of a song-writer for opera, attaching little value to the thought, but concerned chiefly with the musical motives appropriate to the chant. Under such conditions, the words must be regarded only as suggestions, that can never be completed.

**6. The Style of Euripides.**—An innovator in almost all the elements of drama, Euripides was no less novel in the language that his characters spoke, and the novelty followed the same principles and instincts. His characteristic tendency was to bring the language of tragedy closer to that of ordinary life.

Aristotle praised him (*Rhet.* III, 2) because he gave the public the illusion that he was speaking the language of ordinary society, while really expressing himself in lofty diction. The illusion was produced chiefly by his manner of arranging the elements borrowed from familiar speech. There are in his works fewer poetic terms mingled with the words of common usage than in Sophocles. *Magis accedit oratorio generi*, says Quintilian (X, 1, 68). But the difference between him and Sophocles is due less to the choice of words than to the use made of them. If his expressions have not the same plenitude and brilliance, they express more clearly and distinctly the different ideas, presenting them in less studied aspects and so being more intelligible. His style pleases chiefly on account of its naturalness and ease; although spirited and incisive when those qualities are advantageous, it does not savor of preparation. Something familiar, artless, spontaneous, gives it an exquisite charm; and yet this agile, disconnected style is never dry. It pleases the ear as much as the mind. In its simple flow, it has the smoothness which Aristophanes admired and strove to imitate.<sup>1</sup>

It was marvellously well adapted to the needs of repartee, so dear to the Athenians. No one could conduct and prolong like Euripides an exchange of ideas ready, biting, precise, between two speakers replying verse by verse. For condensed discussion or disputation, language must be ready and vigorous, very brief, and very delicate and flexible. There must be no embarrassing hesitations, no heavy, languishing phrases. The expression must always seem new, though the ideas are closely identical; the movement of the sentences must be brusque to break up a tedious argument; or on the contrary, there must be ingenious combinations which suddenly give to the opponent's idea a meaning that is absurd or contrary to his intentions.

When necessary, the language, just now incisive, becomes singularly gentle. It can glide over things that it must not touch. It

<sup>1</sup> Aristophanes, fr. 471, Koch.

has semi-indications, turns and windings, suggestive words, ingenious secondary meanings, and terse expressions of sentiment that suddenly bring tears into one's eyes. It excels no less in the neat turn given to universal truths. Up to the time of Menander, who imitated him, Euripides was the most adroit coiner of maxims that Greece ever saw. In this respect, Quintilian (X, 1, 68) judged him equal to the sages of the sixth century, whose reflections, authentic or not, were gradually developed into a fund of wise, sententious morality. But between them and him there is great difference. Not only can he enunciate with brevity and skill those general truths whose merit is in mere elegant expression; but almost always, in doing so, he bestows upon them an accent of his own that doubles their value.

The influence of the forensic then in process of development was exercised on his language and even on the invention of certain scenes in his dramas. We have seen how fond he was of making his personages plead in formal speeches. They pleaded so well that masters of the art of expression recommended them as models.<sup>1</sup> In such scenes are displayed the dialectic elements of the poet's language. The transitions are short, the turns are varied and simple, and the style is never subject to monotonous regularity. Generally short, yet not too much so, his sentences have gravity when he needs to emphasize an assertion, lightness for insinuations, and vivacity when urgency of situation needs to be expressed. Here and there, parentheses of two or three words thrown out in passing add life and movement. An accessory idea, a reproach, a recollection, or a regret suddenly arising, mingles with the principal thought and does not disturb it. Thus he employed much realism and but few artifices of rhetoric. If, at times, the latter became too apparent, they were in general used with as much discretion as ease.

The defect of his poetic language is that it does not take on strongly enough the shade of sentiment of his characters. It is not sufficiently aristocratic, in a way, for heroes borrowed from epic legend. It makes them too modern, too much like his Athenian contemporaries, and also, possibly, too much like one another. It is a language more and more capable of expressing universal ideas or sentiments, though thereby ceasing to be sufficiently characteristic of tragedy and of epic manners. This is the reason why an original comic poet like Aristophanes imitated Euripides even in his lifetime; and shows still better why the language passed as a heritage, without essential modification, to Menander and the poets of the New Comedy.

<sup>1</sup> Quintilian, X, 1, 68: "Et dicendo ac respondendo cuilibet eorum qui fuerunt in foro disertis, comparandus."

**7. Completion of the Period of Tragedy.**<sup>1</sup> — The successive study and comparison of the three great tragic poets of the fifth century has given us a general view of the evolution of tragedy in its essential features. To complete the study, a few words are needed to characterize the other poets who cultivated the type at the same time or later, and to indicate in summary how tragedy finished its career in Greece.

The number of poets who took part in the tragic competitions at Athens, seems, in the course of the fifth century, to have been great. No other type was then so popular as tragedy; no other assured the victors so much glory and profit. It is probable that several of these poets produced meritorious plays. Certain of their plays won prizes over Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. But the extant portions consist only of titles and fragments, which do not make a literary study possible. We can therefore give only a hasty mention of some few names.

In the family of Æschylus we find a whole line of tragic poets: his son, Euphorion, and his nephew, Philocles the Elder; then in the second generation, Morsimus and Melanthius, sons of Philocles and contemporaries of Aristophanes. The family was continued by other poets in the next century. Iophon, son of Sophocles, obtained some successes toward the close of his father's career. Outside of these privileged houses, we must cite Ion of Chios, a lyric as well as tragic poet, a historian also, and even a philosopher to some extent; Achæus of Eretria, even more famous for his satyr-dramas than for his tragedies; the Arcadian Aristarchus of Tegea; the Sicyonian Neophron, whose *Medea* seems to have been the model for that of Euripides; Mosehion, interesting for his attempts to restore or develop the historic tragedy (*Themistocles*, *The Pheræans*); Critias, one of the thirty tyrants of Athens; and especially Agatho, the only one besides the masters whom we have studied who seems to have shown real originality. All the others, in fact, are said to have resembled more or less either Sophocles or Euripides, and generally both at once. Agatho, born about 445, inaugurated, toward the close of the century, about 415, a slightly different form of tragedy. A pupil of the popular sophists, elegant and affable in manners, he was much in vogue for a decade or so. About 405 he had already left Athens. He is said to have died, still young, at Pella, in Macedon, not long before the end of the fifth century. The most celebrated of

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: The fragments of the lesser tragic poets are in the collections of Wagner and Nauck, *sup. cit.*

Consult: Weleker, *Griechische Tragödien*, III; Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, *sup. cit.*

his tragedies were the *Destruction of Ilium*, and especially the *Anthos* (*Flower*), or the *Anthæa*, in which, by an exception very rare in the theatre, both the themes and the personages were pure invention. His greatest innovation was that of substituting for the old choral odes, which were more or less connected with the action, musical passages quite separate from it. They were simple interludes (ἐμβόλιμα) which could be transferred readily from one play to another. As for his drama, its chief merit was elegance of style, in which, however, fondness for research and imitation of Gorgias became rather too noticeable.

About the same time, Carcinus, whose work was continued by his sons, combined with oratorical argument spectacular effects obtained by the use of machines, and gave greater importance to the choral ballets. After the beginning of the fourth century, the history of tragedy becomes more and more obscure. We see that it is passing into decadence. Representations, it is true, continue to be given regularly; but the plays were the ancient classic ones, those of the great masters—in connection with new plays regarded as having less merit. Euripides was particularly in favor. Talented actors won their reputations by assuming the principal rôles in his plays. The actors were organized in societies, and travelled from city to city with the masterpieces. Almost all the larger Greek cities then built permanent theatres. The magnificence of the spectacles increased with the art of tragic declamation. But the creative originality of the poets appears to have diminished in the same ratio. In the absence of great works still surviving, it is difficult to determine exactly the character of the last tragedies produced.

A certain number of poets seem to have devoted themselves to continuing the tradition of the masters, under the especial influence of Euripides. They confined themselves to a small number of pathetic legends, always the same; and they sought to renew them, not by character painting, which seemed exhausted, but by ingenious recombinations, more carefully studied intrigue, recognitions, unexpected events, and display of the forensic and dialectic then in vogue. Such were, doubtless with individual differences unknown to us: Aphareus, the adopted son of Isocrates; Astydamos the Elder, a descendant of Æschylus, and his son, Astydamos the Younger; Theodectes of Phaselis, a celebrated orator as well as tragic poet; and still others whose names have not sufficient merit to be mentioned.

Some few, a very small number, exaggerating still more the importance of rhetoric, show a tendency somewhat distinct. They



are poets of feeble dramatic sense, who regard tragedy as a basis for amplifications or descriptions, and who, at last, seem to aim rather at being read than represented. The best known among them is Chæremon, who has left us a few fragments. He appears to be a graceful poet, though lacking force. His elegance is rather effeminate, and in no way appropriate to the theatre.

To this period, which is obscure enough on the whole, belongs a single tragedy still extant, the *Rhesus*, falsely attributed by the manuscripts to Euripides. The play, a dramatic recasting of the tenth book of the *Iliad*, the *Lay of Dolon*, represents the death of Rhesus, king of Thrace, who came to the help of Troy, but was surprised and massacred in his camp by Odysseus and Diomed. It is a curious example of composite art, showing imitation of the three great masters of classic drama, with a marked taste for the picturesque in representation and for pompous recitative.

At last, toward the middle of the fourth century, the time of Alexander the Great, tragedy, without ceasing to be in favor, no longer produced original works. It was to be perpetuated in the succeeding period in theatres erected by the successors of Alexander in their new capitals; but it was no longer renewed. Its influence, assured by the great classic masters, was still great; it spread everywhere the knowledge of the old legends and the relish for dramatic emotions; it was one of the agents in the diffusion of Hellenism, and of all the ideas and sentiments connected with it. It gave rise to Roman tragedy; and much later, after the Middle Ages, it contributed largely to produce the modern classic drama. Yet from the time of Alexander, it may be regarded as exhausted, since it ceased to inspire great poets. The survival of the type, due to the talent of the actors who tried to maintain its vigor, necessarily seemed artificial; and the time was to come, as might have been prophesied, when the public, weary of seeing only the plays that it had seen already, preferred the mute spectacle of pantomime, which recalled the same legends without the fatigue of constant repetition.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BEGINNINGS OF COMEDY

1. First Forms of Comedy. The Phallic Chants and the Dionysiac *Comos*. The So-called Doric and Megarian Comedy. Susarion, Myllus, Meson.
2. Sicilian Comedy. Epicharmus.
3. Origin of the Sicilian Mime. Sophron and Xenarchus.
4. Rise of Attic Comedy. Comic Contests. Earliest Poets of the Old Comedy. Cratinus.
5. Form and Character of Comic Representations at Athens.
6. Structure of Comedy.
7. Nature of the Action and of the Characters in the Comedy of the Fifth Century. Its Spirit. Definition of the so-called Old Comedy. Its Language.

**1. First Forms of Comedy. The Phallic Chants and the Dionysiac *Comos*. The So-called Doric and Megarian Comedy. Susarion, Myllus, and Meson.**<sup>1</sup>—While tragedy was thus accomplishing its evolution, the other great form of drama, comedy, was developing beside it, somewhat under its influence, and following, through various phases, a destiny no less complex.

Like tragedy, Greek comedy was developed out of the Dionysiac festivals, and remained intimately connected with them throughout the classic period.

According to some important testimony in Aristotle's *Poetics* (c. 5), it had its origin in the *phallic* chants. These were sung by a rustic procession which bore across the fields an emblem of fecundity. An affirmation from such an authority cannot be put in question: but one may remark that Aristotle, in thus expressing himself, has not wished to describe all the details of the things he witnessed; and that the brevity of his statement, if it be taken literally, would make them appear more simple than they were. In the beginning, the festivals took place in the Attic demes on dates not everywhere the same. Later, when dramatic competitions were

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: The fragments of the comic poets have often been collected, particularly by Meineke, *Fragmenta Comicorum Græcorum*, 5 vols., Berlin, 1839-1841; Meineke and Bothe, *Comicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, with a Latin translation, 1 vol., Paris, Didot, 1855; Th. Koek, *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1880-1888; Kaibel, *Comicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, 1st part of vol. I of *Poetarum Græcorum Fragmenta*, by Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, Berlin, 1899.

GENERAL WORKS: Meineke, *Historia Comicorum Græcorum*, 1839, being vol. I of the above collection; Du Ménil, *Histoire de la comédie ancienne*, 2 vols., Paris, 1864-1869; Denis, *La Comédie grecque*, 2 vols., Paris, 1886; Couat, *Aristophane et la comédie attique*, Paris, 1889.

regularly held, comedy was assigned more specially to the Lenæa, the city festival celebrated at the close of winter. This is an arrangement whose origin and antiquity are obscure.

At all events, the object of the rustic processions was to celebrate mirthfully the power of the god who gave the wine. Like the dithyramb, they demanded the presence of a soloist (ὁ ἐξάρχων) and of a chorus. The soloist celebrated the god, the joy of the day, the good wine; and doubtless, too, he mingled with his hymns, which were more or less improvised, countless jests and turns of fancy; the chorus replied in refrains, mingled with cries and appeals to the god. In the absence of regular form, there might be occasion for raillery or buffoonery, perhaps even for snatches of dialogue. At any rate, judging from the formal testimony of Aristotle, this was the first and most essential element of primitive comedy.

But the chants formed part of a series of noisy celebrations, from which they could not be separated except by abstraction. They constituted together the *comos*; and it is precisely from this title that the word "comedy" was formed. To celebrate the *comos* (κομάζειν) meant not only to go through the fields in procession, but also to banquet, and after the banquet, to go into the streets in joyous bands, that danced, bandied and disputed with one another, improvised taunts, and perhaps mimicked some one whom they considered ridiculous. Such a festival, celebrated in intoxication, was really a comedy, informal as yet, and rather disorganized, but singularly animated. It needed only discipline to produce works of artistic merit.

To these primitive elements must perhaps be added the procession of wains (πομπεία), spoken of in certain ancient accounts. What is probably meant is the going and coming of the vine-dressers when they took their casks to the city. The usage appears to have given rise to a joyful carnival comparable to the primitive *Return from the Courtille*. There were challenges, sportive mockery, and well-meant billingsgate; coarse language, bacchic songs, cries, and disputes; and all was accompanied with bursts of laughter. This could suggest to nascent comedy many an invention whose nature to-day it is difficult to determine. However, we need not follow the development of each one, since chance and caprice must have played an important part. The only thing possible is to give a general idea without pretending even to apparent exactness — for exactness would alter the reality.

These ancient usages are attested for Attica. They must have been in vogue at the same time through all the regions of Greece where the vine was cultivated. It has been thought that, in certain

Doric countries, comedy had been produced ever since the sixth century under more regular forms.<sup>1</sup> But what we discern there scarcely differs from what has been described. In Laconia, various kinds of dances and mimic representations are cited in which men called *dicelistes* took part. But the mimicry was rather like pantomime than like comedy in the strict sense. At Sicyon, bands of *phallophores* are mentioned, who indulged in various buffooneries. This must have closely resembled, in the beginning at least, the Attic improvisations to Dionysus. We are not, however, in possession of definite dates.

But at Megara, after the sixth century, something like an attempt at organized comedy may be discerned. Aristotle speaks of the influence exercised by the rise of the democracy over the new literary production, and of the warm reception which its representatives found in the villages of the district. These statements refer, in a general way, to the sixth century; and we have no reason for calling them in question. The difficulty lies in defining just what this comedy was. It certainly was satiric, since it owed its rise to the growth of public liberty; but probably it had no great literary merit, as it did not succeed in gaining admission to the cities. We may suppose that it consisted chiefly of short, mirthful scenes, mingled with songs more or less resembling those played spontaneously in the Dionysiac festivals. These disconnected scenes, as a type, must have been more like our parades at fairs than like real comedy.

It is this Megarian farce which, according to a tradition rather uncertain and doubtful, was brought to Attica by Susarion about 570. After him, Myllus and Mæson, poets still more obscure, are said to have cultivated it with success in the time of Pisistratus and his sons. These statements are really insufficiently confirmed; and it is only in the beginning of the next century, after the time of the Persian Wars, that Attic comedy really made its appearance in literary history.

**2. Sicilian Comedy. Epicharmus.**<sup>2</sup>—But comedy had been organized some years earlier in another part of the Greek world, namely, Sicily. It is there that we must study its real origin.

The beginnings of the Sicilian comedy are even more obscure than those of the Attic type. We may believe, however, that there was

<sup>1</sup> Gysar, *De Doriensium Comædia*, Cologne, 1827.

<sup>2</sup> Editions: Krusemann, *Epicharmi Fragmenta*, Haarlem, 1834; Mullach, in *Philosophorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, I, Paris, Didot, 1860; Kaibel, *Comicorum Græcorum Fragmenta*, sup. cit.

Consult: Denis, sup. cit.; Artaud, *Fragments pour servir à l'histoire de la comédie attique*, Paris, 1863; J. Girard, *Études sur la poésie grecque*, Paris, 1884.



no great difference between them. There, too, it was probably from the joyful festivities of Dionysus that the future literary type arose. And one may at least suspect, if not assert, that certain special influences favored its development there more than elsewhere. The Sicilian people were fond of jest and sport; they had a natural relish for mimicry and expressive gesture; they liked to mimic or parody everything that excited their spirit of merriment. It seems that iambic poetry among them was particularly successful. In a fragment of Epicharmus appears the name of a certain Aristoxenus, otherwise unknown, who probably won some local fame for success in this type of composition. In any case, one can scarcely doubt that the mime, which is an amusing imitation of certain scenes of daily life, was popular there. Indeed, we shall soon see that it became literary. Before being admitted as literature, it must have been produced spontaneously, by improvisation, in social reunions, public houses, and market-places. The mime is really the basis of Sicilian comedy. It is not impossible that this race of improvisers, clever in imitating serious things for its own amusement, took pleasure in parodying even mythological scenes that had been rendered familiar by epic or lyric poems. However this may be, the representation of ordinary manners, as the principal component, with mythological parody and intentional satire, as accessories, are the elements from which Sicilian comedy was formed.

It had two noteworthy representatives. Epicharmus and Phormis (or Phormus); but the latter's works, for some reason, seem to have disappeared with him, while the former's were long extant and are still fairly well known from fragments and notices. Hence it is with Epicharmus alone that we must be occupied at present.

Born probably at Cos, between 520 and 500, he went, when very young, to Megara Hyblæa in Sicily. He seems to have established himself early at Syracuse, where, says Suidas, he brought out plays as early as 486. Soon becoming famous, he enjoyed the favor of the tyrants Gelo and Hiero. After the latter's death, in 468, he disappears from sight. A biographer assures us that he lived to the age of ninety. He wrote about forty comedies.

Epicharmus is one of the great names in Greek literature. Plato considered him the most eminent representative of light poetry, as Homer was of serious.<sup>1</sup> According to the express statement of Aristotle, his great innovation was that he gave to comedy plot, or intrigue.<sup>2</sup> Till then, notwithstanding some futile attempts to do this, it was composed of short, isolated scenes or disconnected burlesques. He was the first to succeed in making the public accept an

<sup>1</sup> Theætetus, p. 152 E.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Poet.*, c. 5.

action analogous to that of tragedy — the regular development of a given situation, through a certain number of phases, to its resolution.

This action, as far as we can judge from such titles of his plays as are known, was now borrowed from myth, now created by the poet in imitation of the incidents of contemporary life. In the first case, comedy was an adventure, heroic or divine, turned into sport; in the second, it was a representation more or less occupied with the manners of the time. It is quite possible that the first of the two forms served as a model for the second. Myths had furnished the Athenian and Sicilian tragedy and satyr-drama with themes for more than a century. In a way, Epicharmus needed only to change into buffoonery what was otherwise represented in seriousness; and, as the adventures of the gods were, on the whole, commonplace enough, often resembling those of mortal men, the task of transforming this mythological comedy into the comedy of real life was almost reduced to the changing of the names.

The extant fragments and titles do not enable us to get a precise idea of the manner in which Epicharmus developed a comic theme. At the very most, a word of Horace leads us to believe that his plays, in general, were remarkable for animation and movement, like those of the Latin poet Plautus, who imitated him (*Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi*, *Ep.* II, 1, 58). From this, one may suppose that they were still somewhat like elementary comedy, of which they were a transformation. The scenes were short, the plot not complicated, the digressions realistic but not numerous; and the action proceeded in rapid course directly to its resolution. Yet this, we must admit, is only a conjecture, and a vague one. Unfortunately, we have not the means of rendering it more precise.

Fantasy, observation, and reflection seem to have had almost equal importance in the invention of his details and in the creation of his characters. His *Marriage of Hebe* contained long descriptions of a miraculous fishing expedition of Poseidon and of an Olympic banquet. There were in it amusing enumerations of names, and of kinds of fish and mollusks. But we can discern in it the work of a man of shrewd observation, a mirthful poet who took delight in comic effects. Four verses of his *Busiris* represent Heracles as about to satisfy his giant appetite; some narrator has transcribed it thus: "Only to see him eat is enough to make one die of fear. A dull rumble issues from the depth of his gullet; his jaws crash; his molars grind with a frightful dry sound; his canines gnash horribly; his nostrils snort; his ears move up and down." Clear, strong vision of details is combined in these verses with a fantastic excess that becomes brutal.

The writer had a sense of what would amuse the throng; we shall see elsewhere that he had as well a fine moral intuition.

Some extant passages of his really show that he could draw character. He was the first to represent those types of common humanity which have always so fully occupied comic drama, and he did it well. One of his most interesting fragments, taken from a play entitled *Hope*, is the monologue of a parasite, who does honor to his grossness with the cynicism of a buffoon; and yet, beneath the light effrontery, unprincipled squalor is displayed in all its crudeness:—

“I dine with any one who wishes me: enough that he invites me; and even sometimes with those who do not wish me; really the invitation is superfluous. At table, I am full of wit, I make everybody laugh, I praise the man who gives the dinner. If any one attempts to contradict him, I assume his defence, I do, and take upon myself the quarrel. When I have eaten and drunk well, I go away. No slave, lantern in hand, attends me. I pass along, not without false steps—along through the dark—all alone. And if by chance I meet an officer, I consider it a great favor of the gods, that he does not beat me unmercifully, but rests content with giving me a fair cudgelling. When at length I arrive home black and blue, I lie down on the hard earth; and for a time, I cannot sleep, until at last the good effect of the fine wine makes itself felt upon my spirits.”

If some happy chance had preserved for us the *Peasant*, the *Pillage*, and the *Megarian Woman*, we should have in them frank pictures, in which some of the most interesting specimens of the Greek people of Sicily would be brought before us. The costumes of the people, their life, their motion, their familiar intercourse, would be no less vividly portrayed than their character. To describe the appearance and the reality—to seize at a glance the characteristic trait of the disposition or the dress, and to develop it with an amusing sense of the ridiculous is the great gift of true comic poets, and certainly that of Epicharmus.

Such comedies were full of philosophy, since they were full of truth. But the ancient notices represent Epicharmus as a philosopher in the strict sense of the word. Diogenes Laertius gave him a place in his *Lives of the Philosophers*, classing him as a Pythagorean. And in so doing Diogenes clearly followed a tradition, confirmed to some extent by a goodly number of extant fragments. Yet it would probably be an exaggeration to attribute to the comedies of Epicharmus a very clearly marked tendency to Pythagoreanism. It is hard to see how a light, popular composition should have been used in setting forth abstract doctrines: and if by impossibility the miracle had been realized, no doubt his didactic comedies would

have produced, as such, a greater stir in the world than they did. Epicharmus was, indeed, a reflective genius, writing under the influence of contemporary philosophy. He studied it for his own pleasure, and so must have made frequent allusion to it in his plays. Thus he could be really a philosopher in comedy, as Euripides, a little later, was in tragedy. Such was the reputation he acquired while still alive; and this gave rise after his death to Pythagorean treatises composed under his name, which, owing to the current opinion, could be attributed to him without much implausibility.

He revealed to Greece the true nature of comedy. He was the model for the great Attic poets; and when Plato put him above them, at the side of Homer, he did so justly, since Epicharmus at least preceded them, even if he did not pass by them on the royal road.

**3. Origin of the Sicilian Mime. Sophron and Xenarchus.**<sup>1</sup> — While we are occupied with Sicily, let us take the opportunity to consider, regardless of chronology, the origins of a type closely akin to comedy, the mime. We have indicated that it was probably spontaneous among the Sicilian people. At any rate, it assumed among them a literary form in the second half of the fifth century.

The man who raised it above obscurity was Sophron. He was a Syracusan, probably of humble origin, who by his art maintained always an intimate connection with the people. According to Suidas, he was contemporary with Euripides. His plays, called mimes, like the popular improvisations whence they are said to have sprung, were divided into two groups, mimes of men (*μίμοι ἀνδρεῖοι*) and mimes of women (*μίμοι γυναικείοι*) according as the characters were the one or the other. It seems that the two sexes were never both represented in the same play — which indicates clearly enough that there was no plot. Each mime was probably a mere short dialogue, devoid of real action, between two popular characters. Nothing can give us a more vivid or truer idea of them than the *Syracusan Women* of Theocritus, that amusing, elegant conversation between two mothers in Alexandria. It is expressly stated by a scholiast to have been imitated from a mime of Sophron. There is no dramatic situation, merely some pretext for chatting or disputes: a visit, an interview, a purchase, a festival, a jostling, no matter what; and then a lively, rapid, amusing conversation, in which

<sup>1</sup> The fragments of Sophron are given in an appendix in Ahrens, *De Dialecto Dorica*, Göttingen, 1843. The best edition is Kaibel, in *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, *sup. cit.*

Consult: Heitz, *Des Mimes de Sophron*, Strassburg, 1851; Fuhr, *De Mimis Græcorum*, Berlin, 1860; Denis, *sup. cit.*



every word is a trait of character. It seems made out of nothing, and yet the nothing is substantial and interesting. A few titles still preserved may help to a better conception of the nature of these mimes: the *Tunny-fisher*, the *Old Man*, the *Fisher and the Peasant*, the *Clothes-mender*, the *Wailers*, the *Sorceresses*, the *Women at the Isthmian Games*, etc. All these plays were in prose, and so were more like reality; but the brief, terse prose, broken into short phrases, had something rhythmic about it which caught the ear. The language was the popular Doric, more popular than that of Epicharmus.

Diogenes Laertius reports that Plato delighted in reading Sophron, introduced him at Athens, and imitated him in his dialogues. The alert, witty grace of the Syracusan, notwithstanding the designed commonplaceness of his subjects, must have afforded much delight and suggestion to the master of Attic dialogue.

After Sophron, the same type was cultivated, but with less success, by his son Xenarchus, of whom we know almost nothing. It is probable that the mime, whatever may have been the vicissitudes of its career, never ceased to please. We shall find it again, modified in form, indeed, but still substantially the same, in Herondas and Theocritus, in the Alexandrian period.

**4. Rise of Attic Comedy. Comic Contests. Earliest Poets of the Old Comedy.** Cratinus.<sup>1</sup> — Comedy had received its form in Sicily at the hands of Epicharmus and Phormis when the second Persian War broke out. In Greece proper, and particularly at Athens, it was still in a rudimentary state. It was only after the victories of Salamis and Plataea that Attic comedy was transformed — raised in character to keep pace with the universal uplift of the national mind. One may consider the fifty years from 480 to 430 as the period of productive organization, preparing the way for the masterpieces of Aristophanes.

Unfortunately it is quite impossible to trace the progress of comedy in Sicily. Even Aristotle could not trace it, so few were the notices that had survived concerning the type. Comedy was not willing to be taken seriously. Its buffooneries were laughed at, but no one took the trouble to note just how it progressed from year to year.

An important advance, however, was made in the adoption of a plot or intrigue by which the scenes could be bound together and the play prolonged to a considerable length. This essentially superior type came from Sicily, as Aristotle seems to affirm. But it is

<sup>1</sup> His fragments are in the collection above mentioned, particularly well edited by Kaibel.

Consult: Poppoehner, *De Comœdiæ Atticæ Primordiis*, 1895.

scarcely doubtful that contemporary tragedy also had some influence in the matter. This innovation would imply several others: the use of masks to give each rôle its proper characterization; the establishment of a normal structure, the formal division into parts more or less analogous to those of tragedy; and the decision upon the number of actors. It must all have taken place in this period; for, in the time of Aristophanes, we find comedy fully developed. But the ancients themselves did not know to whom the successive steps of progress were to be attributed.

Early in the period a decisive event occurred — the institution of a contest in comedy. A fragment of an inscription, found mutilated in 1878, enables us to assert that it was before the last victory of Æschylus in 458; the date may be several years earlier. At any rate, comedy had from then on a recognition in the city. It had once seemed unworthy, and won its first successes in the country. "Much time passed," says Aristotle, "before the archon provided a chorus for comedy; till then, the good will of the people gave it all the aid it received." The subvention of the state placed it on the same rank as tragedy, or almost so. Yet sometimes it paid a dear price for its privilege. Again and again the state restrained its liberty. Plutarch tells of a law that prevented members of the Areopagus from writing comic plays. More serious still, one was passed in 440 prohibiting the representation of actions of men of the day. Abrogated in 437, it was reënacted in 416. Nevertheless, on the whole, during the fifth century, the régime of entire liberty prevailed, as we shall see when we come to study the leading poets of the time.

Chionides and Magnes are cited by Aristotle as the two most ancient comic poets at Athens worthy of being named. The first is said to have made his appearance between 480 and 450. There is nothing of his in existence that can be mentioned here. The reputation of Magnes was more brilliant. Aristophanes has given us a summary of his career in the parabasis of the *Knights* (v. 519 ff.): "I know what happened to Magnes, when his hairs became gray. Yet many were the trophies that he won, victorious over his rivals. In vain, attempting to deceive the people, did he speak all sorts of language, in vain did he play the lute, flap his wings, compose in the Lydian mode, disguise himself as a gnawing gall insect, and give his clothing the tinge of frog's hide: he could please no longer. At last, by a misfortune that he had not known in youth, he was driven from the theatre, an old man, because the spirit of his wit had left him." From this passage, plausible titles have been made out for several of his comedies: the *Lute-players*, the *Birds*, the *Lydians*, the *Gall Insects*, the *Frogs*. They give some idea of the

variety of his invention. Magnes must have been a man with some imaginative power, to give such forms of soaring fancy to the old Dionysiac satire. As long as he made new inventions, he held the favor of the people; but he lacked force of thought. Men grew weary of his buffooneries when they perceived that these were used again and again, and that nothing new was put in their place.

The great comic poet of the period is Cratinus, who, in his old age, was the rival of Aristophanes. We do not know the date of his birth. His successes were won between 449 and 423. He was an Athenian. Of his life and personality we know almost nothing, except that he was said by his rivals to love luxury, good cheer, and wine. Whether the imputations were true or not, his character was certainly exuberant; he was animated by an ardent, joyous vigor. Aristophanes, in the parabasis of the *Knights*, playfully compared him to an impetuous torrent: "He rolled along over the flat country, amidst a loud noise of acclamations; and, overturning everything in his way, he carried along pell-mell the oaks, the plane trees, and his uprooted enemies." In a fragment, Cratinus draws a similar picture of himself: "By Apollo! What a flood of words! An ebullition of gushing water! A dozen exits instead of a mouth! A whole Ilissus in his gullet! What more can I say to describe him? If you do not put a plug in his throat, he will overflow everything with his poetry."<sup>1</sup> With such hyperbolic fantasy, there must go an extraordinary nature. If one may believe Aristophanes, Cratinus, like Magnes, ceased to please the people in his extreme old age. In 424, in the passage of the *Knights* already cited, the young poet mischievously represented his old rival as a shattered instrument falling to pieces and no longer having any worth. But these are the words of a satirist and competitor. That very year Cratinus won the second prize, and took the first the year after, with a comedy called the *Bottle*. One is warranted, therefore, in believing that, till the last, he continued in full possession of his powers.

Cratinus is said to have done much to give comedy its form; but we have no evidence on the point in which we can put absolute confidence. His part in morals and politics was that of a bold censor whose frankness was often brutal. "Cratinus, following in the footsteps of Archilochus," says an ancient critic, "was bitter in his invectives." His raillery is not concealed, as in Aristophanes, beneath a grace that subdues the harshness of the censure; but advances very directly, "with unveiled face," as it were, against men of dishonest character.<sup>2</sup> According to another account, this was one of

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 186, Koch.

<sup>2</sup> *Scholia Græca in Aristoph.*, ed. Didot, proleg. II.

his greatest innovations: "To the pleasure already afforded by comedy, he was able to join profit, in that he censured dishonest men and, with the lash of his tongue, chastised them in the name of public opinion."<sup>1</sup> From this it appears that each of his plays must have been a virulent satire, boldly attacking the men of the day, or things that the poet considered abusive.

What made these satires agreeable to the people, even with their pungency, was the poet's inventive genius. Free and fertile, he excelled in discovering the dramatic phase of an idea. Outlines of comedy sprang up abundantly in his imagination, which was rich, vivid, sportive. He could give a thousand ingenious, striking turns to one and the same theme. He was a creator by instinct, and that constantly, like *Æschylus*, to whom he has been compared. His ardor and natural magnificence made him like the authors of dithyrambs; he resembled them in his enthusiasm, in boldness of sentiment, and doubtless also in style. Lyric poetry was instinctive in him; some of his songs were on everybody's lips. Unfortunately, his very ardor kept him from self-mastery. "As he hurries along," says the ancient critic already cited, "he distorts and dislocates his plan in every way; he cannot complete a drama in conformity with what he announces at the beginning."

Only fragments of his work are extant, together with some titles. A glance shows that he attacked the statesmen of the popular party, notably *Pericles*, gibed at the contemporary effeminacy of character and the rich debauchees, censured the foreign cults and their superstitious rites, and inveighed against the sophists, as inventors of quibbles and corruptors of ancient discipline. At one time he would bring into the theatre a whole chorus of critics dressed like *Archilochus*, a veritable mob, bitterly attacking contemporary vices; at another he would call forth the old legislator *Solon*, filled with indignation at the sight of what had come to pass in the city which he had taught of old to be wise and orderly. The *Bottle* was a personal apology. He represented himself in it as the husband of Comedy, who complained that he abandoned her for Drunkenness, and was ready to bring an action at law against him. Some friends intervened; Comedy, much vexed, exposed to them her grievances; *Cratinus* made the best defence that he was able; and the affair terminated, probably, in a compromise. All this was handled in a spirit of which we can still judge from a few extant verses. *Cratinus* seems to have tried also another sort of comedy (owing to the law of 440), in which he named no one and no longer treated politics, but confined himself to literary parody. This was probably in the play

<sup>1</sup> *Scholia Græca in Aristoph.*, ed. Didot, proleg. V.



entitled *Odysseus*. But it is an exception among his plays, and more interesting than important.

After Cratinus, we need mention, among the predecessors of Aristophanes, only Crates and Pherecrates. "Crates," says Aristotle (*Poet.*, c. 5), "was the first at Athens to break from the writing of iambics (that is, from direct, personal satire) and compose plays general in tendency and purely fictitious." He was in favor from about 445 and during the succeeding years till about 424. In his play entitled the *Wild Beasts*, two characters dream out loud of a marvellous life in which there is no longer any need of slaves, man being served by the animals, or even by domestic utensils grown intelligent. Comedy, thus transformed, becomes a fairy tale. Pherecrates, a writer somewhat younger than Crates, seems to have cultivated the same sort of play. Yet moral purpose is more clearly evident in him. His comedy of the *Wild Men* was at once sportive and philosophic. In it a chorus of misanthropes, disgusted with society and its institutions, go to dwell among real savages. But savagery, though charming them at a distance, seems, on trial, odious and intolerable.

‡ **5. Form and Character of Comic Representations at Athens.**<sup>1</sup>—From the middle of the fifth century, comedy was established, under the influence of the poets just named, and before their disappearance, in the form that it was to have in Aristophanes. This is the place, then, to say a few words about its nature. In certain ways, it resembled contemporary tragedy; but in others, it was different. To avoid repetition, we shall note here only some of the differences.

Comedy at Athens in the fifth century was played at the time of the Lenæa, the urban Dionysia, and the rural Dionysia. But this last festival was confined to hamlets and villages and had no great splendor. We need not attach much importance to it. At the city Dionysia, tragedy was given the first rank, comedy being relegated to the second. On the contrary, the Lenæan festival was properly that of comedy, almost all the extant plays of Aristophanes being brought before the public on the occasions of this festival.

What has been said respecting the institution called choregia and the part of the archon relative to tragedy, applies to comedy as well. The poets who took part in the competitions were likewise three in number; yet each of them brought out only a single play.

The material equipment of the theatre seems to have been the same. But as comic personages could be placed in a wider range of localities, the scenic representations made greater demands on the imagination of the spectators. The action was shifted from the

<sup>1</sup> See foot-note, p. 172.

city to the country, from the earth to the sky, probably without necessitating any change in the scenery. Fantasy, accordingly, could set up its claims and no one thought of disputing them.

The comic chorus was more numerous than that of tragedy. It had twenty-four choreutes, instead of twelve or fifteen. Disguised to suit the poet's fancy, without regard for plausibility, these presented themselves in striped costumes adorned with characteristic ornaments. We have mentioned the inventions of Magnes; they took for granted an appropriate stage setting. In Cratinus, each member of the chorus assumed the guise of Archilochus, of the centaur, or of Argos, whose body was covered with wide-open eyes; in Aristophanes, the chorus represented Acharnians, Knights, Babylonians, Clouds, Laborers, Women, Islands, Wasps; in Eupolis they represented Demes, etc. We are not thoroughly informed as to the detail of these grotesque costumes; in general, they could not have been very complicated. The Clouds of Aristophanes were recognized much less by their long, multi-colored, floating robes, than by their words and songs. The Wasps had no other insignia than the taper of their form and the sting that they dragged behind them. It was necessary to make the scene impressive by some amusing emblem. The very simplicity of these absurd inventions was part of their merit. Like the costume, the mask of the comic choreutes incited laughter. As a characteristic detail, we may cite the fact, noted by a scholiast, that the Clouds of Aristophanes wore long noses. We shall speak further on of comic choral odes. The ordinary dance was the cordax (κόρδαξ), resembling the Spanish sara-band, violent and disorderly, even obscene, characterized principally by its waddling motion and its bounds. The choreutes executed a thousand evolutions, rhythmic marches, gambols, formations in file, and leaps of every sort, varying naturally with the needs of the play, and the poet's fancy.

The actors were, by rule at least, three in number, as in tragedy; but while the rule was strictly observed in tragedy, comedy seems to have been freer. Supplementary rôles, or *parachoregemats*, certainly were much more frequent. The costume of the comic actors admitted a variety and extravagance harmonizing with that of the situations and personages represented. As in the case of the chorus, the tight-fitting, or the swaddling, costume, with its party-colors, was the principal garment. By means of cushions the figures were made to take on a ridiculous and even grotesque form. The under garments, tunics, and mantles to some extent marked the rank and manner of life of the personages according to conventions then in vogue, but always with that play of fancy which was one of the

necessities of comedy. For certain rôles at least, the poet could not fail to design at pleasure the garb of his actor, in collaboration with the outfitter. In general the material was striped and the colors gaudy and fantastic, as coming from the Dionysiac cult. The mask of the comic actors varied considerably with the comedy. In the fifth century, when this did not yet represent types of men as it did later, the masks sometimes reproduced more or less strikingly the features of public men. More often, they were simply grotesque. The Birds of Aristophanes had beaks so enormous that the actor who played Euelpidus burst into laughter on seeing them; and when the Herald in the *Acharnians* solemnly announced Pseudartabas, "the King's Eye," there appeared a sombre personage with an enormous eye that hid his entire visage.

**6. Structure of Comedy.**<sup>1</sup>—Comedy in the time of Aristophanes had, like tragedy, a normal structure that varied little from one play to the other. It resulted in part from the origins of the type, in part from the studied efforts of the poets to transform it into a work of art. This led to a greater complexity in the division and grouping of the parts.

A comic play begins with a prologue, a preliminary dialogue preceding the entrance of the chorus and serving to set forth the situation. (The situation, as we shall see, almost always implies a proposition, political or moral, which the play is to demonstrate.)

After the prologue come, as in tragedy, various episodes separated from one another by choral chants. But the division, though essential in tragedy, was much less important and much more capricious in comedy, where the different parts of the same episode were often very unlike one another. The relative independence of the scenes recalled the epoch when comedy was only a series of droll dialogues, succeeding one another without connection. Sometimes in the structure of the scenes one finds forms that are evidently traditional. One of the most curious is that of the "combat of words" found in most of the plays of Aristophanes. Two adversaries maintain contrary theses; the chorus spurs each one on and each speaks in turn; then a judge, ordinarily the coryphaeus, decides which of the two has won. It is a dispute, but governed by rules, a contest in true Greek fashion, with judges and a victor. The variety of the rhythm brings out in each episode the real character of the successive scenes. Besides iambic trimeter, comedy still has at its

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Zielinski, *Die Gliederung der altattischen Komödie*, Leipzig, 1874; H. Weil, *Études sur le drame antique*, *sup. cit.*; Muff, *Ueber den Vortrag der chorischen Partien bei Aristophanes*, Halle, 1872; Arnoldt, *Die Chorpaction bei Aristophanes*, wissenschaftlich erläutert, Leipzig, 1873.

disposal in the dialogue iambic tetrameter, anapests, trochees, and anapestic dimeter. This gives the conversation between the characters a very unique variety of movement. Besides, the metre of comedy is much less strict than that of tragedy. Poetry was permitted by many licenses to assume forms like those of prose; and its doing so even afforded pleasure.

But what chiefly distinguished the structure of comedy from that of tragedy was the character of the choral odes, parodos, parabasis, and interludes.

In the comedy of Aristophanes, the parodos is a passage as much dramatic as lyric — a mixture of song, recitation, and simple dialogue. It always admits of lively animation; and, if occasion offers, this even becomes turbulent. Therefore, instead of being a sort of interlude between the prologue and the first episode, it marks rather a reënfacement of the initial impulse — accelerated motion after the first few scenes. It is connected most intimately with the following scenes; and these, in general, participate in its nature.

The parabasis is a group of songs and spoken passages, belonging strictly to the comedy of the fifth century.<sup>1</sup> At the end of the first episode — which we should style the second act, counting the prologue as the first — the rear of the orchestra was vacant after the exit of the actors, and the choreutes, who were grouped in the foreground, took off their mantles, faced about toward the audience, and advanced a few paces. The name “parabasis” properly designates this forward movement, but it came to be applied to the whole scene that followed. A complete parabasis includes seven distinct parts: the principal one was a discourse of the coryphæus to the public, called the “anapests” on account of the rhythm ordinarily employed. It was preceded by a very short song, the *κομμάτιον*; and ended in a long period recited all in one breath, which was called the long sentence (*μακρόν*), or the choker (*πνίγος*). To this group of three parts succeeded a second, composed of four symmetrical passages; namely, a lyric strophe and antistrophe, the first followed by a recited couplet called “epirrhema,” the second by another couplet in the same metre called “antepirrhema.” The parabasis is found complete only in the earliest of Aristophanes’s plays. In the later ones it lacks certain members; and finally it disappears altogether. Besides the parabasis proper, some of the old plays included, after the third or fourth episode, a passage analogous in structure to the second part of the parabasis.

We need not state and discuss the various opinions put forth upon the origin and nature of this curious element of comedy. However,

<sup>1</sup> J. Combarieu, *De Parabaseos Partibus et Origine*, Paris, 1896.



the discourse of the coryphæus seems to be the relic of a primitive prologue, done away with in the course of the transformations of comedy; and the epirrhema probably represents a form of interlude peculiar to the type of composition.

There were other interludes of less importance that served to separate the episodes when the separation was not otherwise sufficiently marked. They were, in general, rather short songs, comprising at most two strophes and antistrophes, which were almost always light and satiric in tone. All the capricious spontaneity of primitive comedy was revived in these brief compositions, rapid and gay, a charming relic of the rustic *comos*, whose unrestrained boldness and unexpected wit they retained.

All these facts show that the connection of the parts in comedy and tragedy is very different. The tragic stasima mark so many pauses in the action, all about equally important. In comedy, there is only one real pause, or at most two, that of the parabasis and that of the epirrhematic chants. Aside from these, the separations are so slight as hardly to be noticed. The reason for the difference, as we shall see, lies in the very nature of comic action.

**7. Nature of the Action and of the Personages in the Comedy of the Fifth Century. Its Spirit. Definition of the So-called Old Comedy. Its Language.** — For a poet of the fifth century to conceive the plot of a comedy was to imagine a droll situation which should also be a satire. The story needed to be very simple, for it was really a mere pretext. Absolutely, it needed to be amusing; hence there must be in it, above all, animation and movement. The first gift of the comic poet was the gift of invention. He must invent a leading situation, actions at law, quarrels, fantastic journeys, phantoms of the dead, creations of imaginary cities, conspiracies, and finally something to support all this. The support must be not only gay, but novel. The difficulty was great; for the types of comic action were not infinite in number. Repetitions were inevitably made, and competitors copied from each other without permission, and afterwards mutually accused each other of plagiarism. The ever increasing difficulty of departing from the beaten track was doubtless one of the causes leading to the early exhaustion of the type.

On such a general framework, the poet needed to attach as great a number of pleasing incidents as possible. No one wrangled with him about the probability of his action. If only he could raise a laugh, every license was granted him. Unity of place and time were not so construed as to hamper his fancy. He could, if he chose, conceive his heroes in the sky, lead them by unknown paths to a city of the birds between heaven and earth, transport them to Hades, or call

clouds into the orchestra. His liberty was almost absolute, but the spectators understood that he should use it to amuse them. They wished for scenes succeeding one another rapidly and in the variety of a phantasmagoria continually renewed.

So much for the plot strictly speaking: but this, as we have said, was also a satire, and almost always a demonstration in dramatic form. Plot and demonstration, intimately united or rather identified with one another, progressed naturally together and generally helped each other along. We shall refer to this matter again in speaking of Aristophanes. Let us note now a usual, but a characteristic, fact. Often the dramatic combinations were produced by preference at the beginning of the play, because the poet needed to organize his plot there, whereas in the sequel the scenes succeeded each other rapidly without being inherently connected. When there is a plot in comedy, it is sometimes resolved in the middle of the play. Besides, it is the demonstration which, in the form of scenes added to one another, sustains the action and makes it advance. For example, if the poet is discussing the advantages of peace, the characters who cannot appreciate these are converted after the first act; thenceforth the poet needs only to make the advantages evident to the spectators by a series of descriptions or amusing dialogues. It is evident that the structure of such plays cannot but be somewhat lax.

The personages are in harmony with the action. They are above all buffoons, and the revels of a carnival have possession of them. It is true, we shall see later what human reality Aristophanes was often able to put into these extravagant figures; it can hardly be doubted that the other great comic poets of the time also succeeded in doing this to some extent. But in a general account, this is not the thing to which we must call attention. In comic personages, the sentiments of man's character are for the most part concealed by the very nature of comedy. All that is serious, deep, profound, is foreign to them. They may not display affection, generosity, conscience; they lack modesty and every kind of delicate feeling; they have, as it were, certain phases of reason rather than reason in completeness; they are always half-witted, mingling with the ideas of mature men the whims of children and the extravagances of imbeciles. What is more, the nature of the action prevents the poet from developing a character. To the incoherence of the events must correspond that of the beings whose life they form. Hence, if they do have a trace of character, they forget it immediately for the simple pleasure of turning off a witticism. There is nothing solid or consistent in them.

The comic chorus is conceived with still freer fancy. The poet makes it anything he wishes. He transforms it into birds, frogs, insects, clouds, wasps, demes, islands. But the transformation is almost always by design light and superficial. Prolonged pleasantry would become unendurable. The costumes are designed chiefly in view of the entrance into the orchestra. They mark amusingly the dominant character which the poet wishes to assign to the chorus — its inconsistency, its aggressive humor; or else the dominant relation existing between its members and some of the characters. Thus they determine the general nature of its rôle. The Wasps of Aristophanes, once introduced, are no longer wasps except in memory. His Clouds, though mere vapors when Socrates invokes them, become in the course of the action very sage persons, in whom, however, reason does not make impossible a certain mischief. In these dramas, so capricious in their variations, inconstancy is both a necessity and a merit.

Thus constructed, the Athenian comedy of the fifth century is a dramatized polemic. Its spirit is above all one of opposition to innovations. The ridiculous side of old customs is so habitually minimized as hardly to be noticeable; and new practices, though not ridiculous in themselves, are almost always turned to ridicule and made to raise a laugh. A secret instinct impels comedy to attack them. Hence it is hostile to the sophists, philosophic study, luxury, and the amelioration of the material conditions of life. It is hostile also to dramatic innovations, particularly those of Euripides, and to innovations in music. In politics, it inveighs against those who govern, the men of the day, because they are clearly in sight, and their defects are brought out by the public exercise of power. Thus it flatters the malignity of the public. As its representations are made in a democracy, and it attacks the rulers, it has the air sometimes of attacking democratic institutions themselves. Really, it has no such profound purpose. Its great business is to amuse, and we must always guard against imputing to it intentions that contemporaries never would have observed. Yet we must not deny that the satire, though directed against persons, when managed by men of bold philosophic spirit, often necessarily gives rise to ideas not included in its immediate aims. Hence the comedy of the fifth century, however foolish and fantastic in appearance, shows perhaps more than any other dramatic type the liking of the Greeks for general ideas. The spirit of comedy is on every occasion at the service of a practical theme.

This comedy continued with the characteristics we have noted till the beginning of the fourth century. At that time it was called the

Old Comedy, to distinguish it from other forms of comic poetry, quite different in character, that appeared in the fourth century.

Its language was no less original than its structure and spirit. "The Old Comedy," says Quintilian, "is almost the only kind that preserves in its purity the native grace of spoken Attic. Moreover, its language is franker, striking in its censure of vice, and full of force in the other elements of its composition. Grandeur, elegance, and natural charm are its characteristics."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the author of this judgment did not take sufficiently into account the variety of tone permissible in comedy. Light, affected, and satirical in certain parts, which are genuine street songs, its language sometimes has brilliance, gravity, and even grandeur. When it parodies tragedy or dithyramb, it borrows their pompous language to turn them into ridicule. But these are exceptional cases. Its ordinary mode of expression is that which the Roman critic noted. Its foundation is the purest Attic; and this appears in a familiar, even popular form, which distinguishes it from that of tragedy, or that found in the Socratic dialogues. There is no display, no irksome expediency, no thought of formal manners; only admirable ease, relaxation, simplicity, fine grace, and the most open-hearted frankness. Everything is named without reserve, whatever its nature; and so there is a whole vocabulary coming from the wharf or the market — insults, spicy language, indecencies; but with it a thousand happy turns, a thousand descriptive epithets, and vivid phrases not at all savoring of the schools, with polite epithets of conversation tossed off recklessly and as if by chance. It is the language of the Agora or of the Piræus, but more delicate, quick, elegant — perfected in its genius by the spirits of culture.

On this foundation the creative power of the poets was set to work. They borrowed from the old iambic writers or from popular songs, and when they saw fit, created new words after the old models. These are infinitely varied in form: long compounds in which are cleverly mingled a whole medley of ideas, together with unwonted derivatives, forms obtained by absurd analogies, puns similarly obtained, and all that the wish to excite laughter could suggest to alert minds whom no scruple of decency or propriety held in check.

These general features of the Old Comedy are found united in the works of the only representative of it that we really know, namely, Aristophanes. It will be easier to understand and appreciate him, now that we have seen what precedents governed his composition.

<sup>1</sup> *Inst. Or.* X, 1, 65.



## CHAPTER XV

### ARISTOPHANES AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

1. Life of Aristophanes, and his Works. The Extant Plays. 2. His General Tendencies. His Views: Political, Social, and Literary. His Religion. 3. His Dramatic Invention. His Subjects. His Idea of Dramatic Action. 4. The Characters: their Double Nature, Ideal and Real. 5. His Lyric Passages. His Language. 6. Contemporaries of Aristophanes. Eupolis. End of Old Comedy.

**1. Life of Aristophanes, and his Works. The Extant Plays.**<sup>1</sup> — The work of Aristophanes is fairly well known, but not his personality, except for the declarations that he gave the public in his parabases. The only events of his life, however, seem to have been the production of his dramas. Hence it is impossible to separate the biography of the poet from the account of his works.

He was born about 450, and his parents were free-born Athenians, possessors of a small estate at Ægina, which they managed as *cleruchs*. Aristophanes was a talented youth. While still very young he brought out, in 427, his first play, now lost, the *Banqueters of Hercules* (*Δαιταλῆς*), which won the second prize. Already a moralist and a sharp critic of the new tendencies, he followed the fashion of the day in making his plays educational. The next year, in 426, in another play now lost, the *Babylonians*, with true juvenile audacity,

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Bekker, 5 vols., with Latin notes and translation, London, 1829; G. Dindorf, *Aristophanis Comædiæ*, with fragments, excursus, notes, and scholia, 4 vols., Oxford, 1835–1839; Bergk, *Aristophanis Comædiæ*, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1852 and 1872; Meineke, Leipsic, 1860; Blaydes, *Aristophanis Comædiæ*, with notes and the scholia, 12 vols., Halle, 1880–1899; von Velsen u. Zacher, *Aristophanis Comædiæ*, Leipsic, 1869–1897. Dindorf's text, with a Latin translation, is found in the Didot Collection, *Aristophanis Comædiæ*, Paris, 1839, in a volume containing also the fragments; the scholia form a separate volume. Th. Kock, *Ausgewählte Komödien des Aristophanes*, with introduction and notes, Berlin, 1876.

BIOGRAPHIES AND ANCIENT TESTIMONY: The anonymous *Lives* collected at the beginning of the Didot edition of the *Scholia Græca in Aristophanem*.

TRANSLATIONS: French prose, by Poyard, Paris, 1898; and by Brotier, 2 vols., Paris, 1898. English translation of six plays, by B. B. Rogers, London, 1852–1902. The *Works of Aristophanes*, by J. H. Frere, 2d ed., New York, 1874.

Consult: The works mentioned, p. 229; the article *Aristophanes* in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*; Deschanel, *Études sur Aristophane*, Paris, 1867; Th. Kock, *Aristophanes als Dichter und Politiker*, in *Rheinisches Museum*, 39, 1884, p. 119 ff.; Müller-Strübing, *Aristophanes und die historische Kritik*, Leipsic, 1873.

he attacked the demagogues, and particularly Cleon. This brought on him an exciting lawsuit, from which he appears to have come off victorious. He was, however, neither intimidated nor discouraged. In 425 he presented the *Acharnians*, the oldest of his extant comedies, which, though in competition with Cratinus and Eupolis, raised him to the first rank. In it he represents a sturdy peasant, Dicæopolis, whom the war has forced to leave his estate and take refuge in the city. The good fellow wants peace at any price, and as he is the only one who wants it, he concludes a treaty on his own behalf. The charcoal-burners of Acharnæ, who form the chorus, hasten to attack the traitor; but he succeeds in convincing them that he is right. Then, in a series of joyous scenes, we see him reaping the benefits of peace, buying, selling, and making merry, whereas the others suffer from hunger and the miseries of war. The play is excellent from end to end because of the gayety of its invention, its movement, its surprises, the renewal of its interest, and the poetic hardihood manifest at every instant.

Aristophanes brought out these first plays with the collaboration of a certain Callistratus, who undertook to make ready for the representation and direct it. There is reason to believe, however, that Aristophanes did not conceal his own authorship. It seems reasonable to interpret thus a rather obscure fact, which he himself attests; namely that, to the end of his life, he was accustomed frequently to employ either this same Callistratus or another man — a certain Philonides.

But in 424 he himself took charge of the representation of the *Knights*, the most violent attack he had made against the demagogue Cleon. Cleon had just won an unexpected victory at Sphacteria. Notwithstanding this, the young poet did not hesitate to turn to ridicule the favor Cleon was enjoying with the people. The Athenians laughed not only at their favorite, but also at themselves; and the play was a success. Under the name of Demos, he personified the people, in whose hands all power was vested; credulous old Demos was being duped by those who flattered him. He disgraced his faithful servants, in whom we recognize Nicias and Demosthenes, and substituted for them a cozening Paphlagonian, who while preying upon him pretends to be devoted to him. The rascal, of course, is Cleon. The disgraced servants attempt to raise a rival to the old man's favorite in the person of the sausage-seller Agoracritus. Impudent, ignorant, brawling, he finally supplants Cleon by the use of the same means that Cleon used. Demos, restored to reason, regains his youth with his senses. The strife of Agoracritus against Cleon forms the subject of the drama. It has not the gayety nor

the rustic grace of the *Acharnians*, yet atones for this with a satiric and comic force not found so fully in any other play. The Athenian judges assigned it the first prize.

The next year, 423, Aristophanes, again taking up the theme treated in his *Babylonians*, satirized, in the *Clouds*, the sophists and the new education. Strepsiades, a humble peasant, laborious and thrifty, has a prodigal son who cannot pay his debts. The father is eager to learn rhetoric, which he regards as the art of eluding his creditors by deceiving the judges. This art is typified in Socrates, who is transformed for the occasion into a charlatan. But Strepsiades is too thick-headed to understand the lesson that he receives; and so he sends his son to study in his place. The son, Phidippides, when educated, mocks at and beats his father—such are the fruits of this much-lauded education. Strepsiades, converted and furious, sets fire to Socrates's school. The *Clouds*, who give their name to the play and form its chorus, represent the mazes before which philosophers bow in worship. The play obtained only the third prize. The author, more surprised than discouraged, rewrote it, but does not seem to have presented it again. The second edition is what we possess. The rôle of Strepsiades is excellent, giving the chief value to the drama. That of Socrates is only a gross slander; and though amusing, its injustice is offensive. It shows at least how far contemporary opinion was deceived by appearances in appreciating the great man. If the comedy did not contribute directly to his condemnation twenty-five years after, it would be rash to assert that it did not make ready for it indirectly by the false, odious image it created and kept alive in the public mind.

The *Wasps*, played in 422, seems to have had a less general aim. Aristophanes in this play derides the mania for lawsuits that had taken possession of the Athenians; but behind the somewhat thin veil, he sees and discloses the policy of the demagogues, who turn the leisure time of the people and the worst elements in its disposition to their own account. It is really still Cleon who is being censured. An old man named Philocleon is madly fond of lawsuits; around him buzzes the chorus of Wasps, representing the old *heliasts* whose sting is always threatening and who promote and profit by his folly. His son Bdelycleon undertakes to correct him. This difficult undertaking constitutes the real action of the play. Philocleon and his associates are finally converted. After that, the old man, free from the trouble of sitting in court, leads a joyous life. The play is vividly developed, full of spirit and of amusing incidents. It suggested to Racine some of the most successful portions of his *Plaideurs*.

The *Peace*, brought out in 421, was later rewritten. We have only the first edition. The subject is the same as that of the *Acharnians*, but the form is much inferior. The vine-dresser Trygæus, weary of the war, mounts to Olympus on the back of a horned beetle and brings back Peace, whom he induces to dwell in his home, notwithstanding the opposition of certain lunatics. The action is uninteresting, and grows cold beneath the allegory. But the play is full of choice passages, all animate with the poetic charm of the country. Between 424 and 421 appeared also two lost plays, the *Laborers* and the *Merchant Vessels*, in which the poet pleaded for the cessation of hostilities.

From 421 to 414 there is a lacuna in the chronological series of his works; but we have no reason to believe that he maintained silence during this period. The years must have been occupied with plays that have not been transmitted to us. The series begins again in 414 with the *Amphiaræus*, of which, however, nothing is extant; and the *Birds*, which has been preserved. In this second group of plays the satire is generally less harsh and, above all, less personal.

The *Birds* is a charming fantasy mingled with satire, but without any marked general purpose. Two Athenians, Pithetærus and Euelpidus, weary of living in a city where the courts are in session from morning to night, go away to find the birds, make an agreement with them, and induce them to build a new city between heaven and earth, called Nephelococcygia. The intriguers down below would fain win admission, but are driven away with clubs. The gods try unsuccessfully to govern the city; negotiations are entered into, and finally Pithetærus assigns himself the kingdom, despite the claims of Zeus. All this is daring invention, as poetic as it is capricious and ingenious. The moral purpose, if there is one, consists chiefly in unmasking certain impostors and charlatans; but the poet seems to aim rather at amusing than at instructing his public.

Two years later, in 411, the *Lysistrata* was brought out, and also the *Thesmophoriazuse* (Θεσμοφορίαζουσαι). In the former, the poet once more pleaded against the war. This time the women demanded peace, or rather forced it by abandoning their husbands. The conspiracy is led by Lysistrata, who gives her name to the comedy. No other of the poet's plays is so bold in plot or incident, yet in no other is the action better managed. The aim of the *Thesmophoriazuse* is to turn Euripides into ridicule. By his attacks against women, the tragic poet is supposed to have offended them greatly. To spy out and amuse himself with their discussions, his



father-in-law, Mnesilochus, disguised as a woman, slips in among the women of Athens, who are celebrating the festival of Demeter. There he meets with countless dangers, from which his son-in-law, the adroit Euripides, extricates him with great difficulty. The drama is spirited, but Aristophanes has neglected to give a summary of his griefs against Euripides. It is a game in satire rather than a satire proper—a series of skirmishes rather than a regular attack.

This second series was closed by the *Frogs*, one of the most important of Aristophanes's plays. It won the first prize at the Lenæan festival of 405. Here there is represented a formal judicial trial of Euripides and his art. He had just died, a year after Sophocles; the tragic poet Agathos was in Macedon; and Bacchus, patron of the theatre, is represented as anxious about the fate of tragedy. But he has no poet. Impelled by his fears, he decides to go and seek one among the dead. Whom shall he bring? He hesitates between Æschylus and Euripides. A competition takes place; the two rivals mutually attack each other; thus all their art is criticised from the moral as well as the poetic point of view. Euripides is shown to be a sophist who has corrupted tragedy, degraded ideals, troubled men's spirits, and compromised good morality. Bacchus chooses Æschylus and brings him back in triumph to the earth.

The years following were somewhat unfavorable to comedy. The close of the Peloponnesian War had left Athens under a burden. When the democracy was reëstablished, the city took breath, but public spirit had not the same vigor as before. Comedy underwent a transformation. Though in his youth the poet was the incarnation of exuberant fancy and venturesomeness, he was obliged in his old age to conform to the new régime. This he did with a remarkable accommodation of spirit; yet he produced no masterpieces comparable to those of his earlier years.

In 392, he presented the *Ecclesiazusæ*, an attack against contemporary theories. In this play the women of Athens, led by Praxagora, are represented as having got control of the assembly and having passed a vote establishing the principles of absolute communism. They abolished all rights of property and of the family. The theme of the play is the consequences that ensue. These are vividly portrayed. One no longer finds harsh satire directed against the powers of the day. The poet attacks a scholastic system, a chimera. Does he have specially in view a certain school, for example that of Plato, as has been supposed? He has not told us and we do not know. There is the same tendency in the *Plutus*, of which the first edition was brought out in 408, and the second, rewritten, in 388.

The extant version is the second edition. A sturdy fellow, Chremylus, having found the god of riches, a blind god as everybody knows, takes him to the temple of Asclepias, gets him healed, and maintains him in his own home. In consequence a whole group of honest people, his neighbors and himself, become rich and devote themselves to banqueting. Under this guise is given a view of the ever recurring social question; and the intervention of Poverty, in a celebrated scene in which she extols her merits, gives the play a moral tone, that is unfortunately diminished and obscured by the final scene.

This was probably the last comedy that Aristophanes presented in his own name. He is said to have composed also the *Cocalus* and the *Eolosicon*, plays that have been lost. At the time they were represented as the works of his son Ararus, for whom he wished thus to win public favor. The former was, even at this early date, a comedy of intrigue; the latter, a parody.

Aristophanes died soon after this event. His anonymous biographer tells us that Plato composed for him this epitaph, "The Graces, seeking a temple which should not perish, chose the soul of Aristophanes." Besides the eleven plays that we possess and those that we have mentioned, he composed a number of others, of which we have only titles and fragments. The total appears to have been at least forty. ✓

**2. His General Tendencies. His Views: Political, Social, and Literary. His Religion.**—The first question that arises when one tries to appreciate this series of remarkable works is, How far can they be taken seriously? When taken together they suggest the idea of a system of political, social, and literary views from which might be deduced a doctrine. One is tempted to regard Aristophanes as a thinker well able to judge of affairs in his time, whose opinion merits much consideration. Is this really the case? Behind these brilliant invectives are we to look for a clearly defined policy, an established creed, and a criticism resting upon known principles?

If so, then surely Aristophanes would need to be regarded as a devotee of tradition, the resolute enemy of innovation. One would be obliged to suppose that from his youth, before he was twenty, he showed a constant inclination toward the past as against the future; and that, devoted to the ancient ideals which were being abandoned more and more, he did not cease to defend them and attack all that tended to corrupt them. And though in itself this would not appear improbable, yet it seems that one should then be able to deduce from his criticism a number of affirmations that would constitute his

doctrine. But as soon as one seeks these, it is seen to be impossible to formulate them. Aristophanes censures democracy; is he, then, a partisan of aristocratic institutions, and would he institute a current of opinion tending to reëstablish them? There is nothing in his plays that permits us to suppose this. What he censures is certain men and certain abuses; he lashes and turns to ridicule Cleon, Lamachus, Hyperbolus, Cleophon, and even makes sport of Pericles after his death. He shows how the people are deceived and sometimes wheedled by them. Does he, therefore, think that the state would be better governed by other masters? Really, we do not know. He denounces the impiety of the sophists, the dangerous subtleties of their instruction, the perilous seductions of that rhetoric which obliterates the sense of justice. Would he have wished men to abstain from learning the art of language and to return outright to the old education? or did he mean simply to point out some deplorable excesses while advocating necessary changes? He has not said. The resolute adversary of Euripides, did he sustain the same relation to all contemporary poetry? It would appear not; for he at least admired the style of the poet whom he derided. As for religion, if he pretended to defend it against the theorists who advocated atheism, this was certainly not because he had a scrupulous respect for the gods. It is well known with what informality he treated them in more than one passage. All this, it must be confessed, does not give us the idea that he was a theologian, nor even a believer. We see, indeed, what he attacked; but when we endeavor to say precisely what he defended, we are at a loss.

May it not be that really he never comprehended himself, and possibly never felt the need of doing so? Let us consider how he was reared. From youth his instincts, which were only the consciousness of his rare powers, carried him toward comedy. His education was obtained while listening to the plays of Cratinus and his contemporaries, meditating upon them, and trying to imitate them. As soon as he began to think for himself, his thought was in a way moulded upon theirs. In trying to imitate their art, he adopted also their spirit, which was inseparable from it—a spirit of satire, opposition, and mockery at extravagance. The processes of the profession were therefore early adapted to the spontaneous trend of his genius, which was then just what it was later; and therefore he never became anxious to search for the true and the ideal. To seize upon the ridiculous and display it before all eyes, that was his calling. All his insight, natural good sense, and wit were used to disclose this, as was his poetic fancy and talent in exaggerating and

adapting it for the stage. Characters thus formed do not have doctrines; for they are strangers to disinterested research. They have tendencies, whose principal element is the instinct of what their art demands and of what is most fitted to bring out the brilliance of their powers.

Must we say then, on the other hand, that the comedies of Aristophanes lack seriousness? We cannot go so far. When he attacks contemporary statesmen, it is true we cannot accept his testimony, because it is that of a pamphleteer and professional satirist. We have no reason for thinking him juster in this than he was when he portrayed Euripides. But he is just to as great an extent, and this makes his account worth attention. For, in criticising Euripides, if he sees only his defects and exaggerates them beyond all reason, he does evince, by the essential justice of his remarks, undoubted clear-sightedness. And this is true of all his censures. That he calumniated Pericles, Cleon, and many others, we do not doubt. But in attributing to them intentions that they did not have and acts that they did not perform, he more than once perceived and brought to light the secret viciousness of their policy, or better, that of all policy which cannot live without public approval, thinks itself justified in flattering public opinion, and in deceiving it for the sake of retaining power. It would be much more unjust on the whole to degrade him to the rank of a simple jester than to raise him to that of a philosopher or political economist. Very keen good sense constituted the moral worth of his dramas; and even if it did not keep him from prejudice and injustice, it caused him to bring constantly to light truths whose particular application may have been doubtful, but whose eventual correctness is beyond dispute.

**3. His Dramatic Invention. His Subjects. His Idea of Dramatic Action.**—To represent these truths in comedy, Aristophanes does not seem to have sensibly modified the procedure of his predecessors. No remarkable innovation is attributed to him either in substance or in form. What distinguishes him from the other comic poets is not his dramatic method, but his personal qualities.

He had, to an eminent degree, force and variety of invention, joined with grace and a discretion peculiarly Attic, which was manifest even in his drollest exaggerations.

His invention always has this as its chief merit — that it is of the sort best fitted to express his idea; it has, too, the merit of being naturally comic, and of permitting a rich development of fancy. From this double point of view, each of his subjects is a treasure trove; the more one studies him, the more one admires his propriety, justice, and innate drollery. If he wishes to plead the cause of peace,



though he might have done so in a thousand ways, what a happy idea that of bringing before us a man who has made a treaty quite on his own account and who lives in the enjoyment of peace, while every one around is suffering from the effects of war. The thesis is at once expressed in drama, the statement provided with a vivid and sensible demonstration. How many amusing incidents such a subject offers to the imagination of a poet! To be sure, its improbability is excessive, yet not such as fancy cannot accept. It has a certain reasonableness, as it consists merely in the investment of an isolated person with those rights which in real life, society reserves to itself. The supposition is impossible from the social point of view; but, for all that, it is not absurd in itself. What we have said of the *Acharnians* is as applicable to the *Knights*, the *Wasps*, or the *Clouds*, if we consider the essentials of their invention. There is always the same clearness in the definition of the theme, always a situation fitted to give the idea its full value by presenting it under the form best suited to demonstration, and at the same time most pleasing. Everywhere in the buffoonery there is the same adherence to reality. This informs the spectator that he is looking at a scene of contemporary life, and also makes it seem animated.

Even when the poet's imagination seems to soar most freely, in plays that might be regarded as works of pure fancy, like the *Birds*, analogous remarks are still found applicable. In the midst of the drama there is an invention which brings out the idea clearly; and though bold, it seems surcharged with good sense. We have here the ideal city, *Nephelococcygia*, contrasting with the real city Athens, and carefully guarding against all that encumbers the latter. Such an invention defines the theme and creates the whole play.

Consequently, if the subjects of Aristophanes did not differ essentially from those of Cratinus or Eupolis, it is proper to admit that they possessed, in an eminent degree, the qualities necessary to bring the type to its perfection. Moreover, these qualities were found, not only in the preliminary invention and in the theme, but in the development of the drama as well. That was perhaps the principal reason of his superiority.

The art of developing the action in Old Comedy was properly that of putting logic into the incoherence and probability into the fancy. It supposes a rare combination of diverse, and even opposed, qualities. We have seen that Cratinus, with his inexhaustible animation and his soaring flights of fancy, frequently failed in this. Forgetting his proper field, he ran off into pure fancy or satiric digressions. This Aristophanes never did. He was not bound to cumbersome, ungraceful exactitude, or to rational connection of the

events, which would have been incongruous in a play of fancy ; but all seems free in the development of his drama. All, or almost all, is incident, surprise, unforeseen caprice, sally, whim, or droll, absurd improvisation. The ideas in detail spring from the character of the personages ; each scene has its own unexpected inventions. This is necessary ; and it is in this variety, this apparent incoherence, that the comic poet's genius is manifest. If we compare the invention of details with the fundamental invention, we see at once that they all depend on it, all spring spontaneously from it, and are in a way only its expansion and development. Certainly Dicæopolis, in the second part of the *Acharnians*, might have proceeded differently. The scene of the Megarian, that of the Bœotian, and that of Lamacchus, are not necessarily demanded by the situation ; but are all somewhat accidental, and independent of each other. They seem to follow one another with no other guiding principle than that of the poet's fancy. Nevertheless, they all conform to the general theme, fall naturally into the series, and tend to the same demonstration. Hence there is logic in the assemblage ; but it is flexible, discreet, typical of Athens.

The plan of the play is evidently that which we have defined above when we attributed it to the entire Old Comedy. It is the union of a thesis and a story, so associated that the story shall be the demonstration of the thesis. The peculiarity of Aristophanes lies in the perfect fusion of the two elements. The thesis, far from burdening the story, communicates elements of interest and piquancy of its own. The story, far from veiling the thesis, impresses it on the hearer by a force belonging to the story ; and finally, the action and the resolution constitute a sort of visible evidence of the truth of the thesis.

**4. The Characters: their Double Nature, Ideal and Real.** — In the plays live and move a throng of characters who quite naturally share the characteristics of the action. They, too, are fantastic, droll, and often incoherent. What we have said in a general way of the characters in the Old Comedy applies particularly to those of Aristophanes ; for it is chiefly from these that we have tried to conceive the others. There would be no cause to refer to the subject again, if certain traits, though perhaps not peculiar to the poet, did not appear in his works sufficiently marked to merit attention by themselves.

For the most part the great characters that interest us for their own sake, those of the first order, are first, types, and afterwards, individuals. They represent a class of men whose dominant sentiments they possess. Dicæopolis and Strepsiades are the Athe-

nian peasant under two different aspects; Philocleon is the Athenian burgher considered in one of his most interesting aspects. Cleon himself is much less the historic personage of that name than the demagogue who flatters the people that he may become their master; and the Socrates of the *Clouds* is in no respect the teacher of Plato, but the sophist, or in other terms, the retailer of counterfeit knowledge, the master of cunning and cleverness. Hence they all have an ideal character; for these traits are common to a whole class, and not distinguished from the complex reality except in so far as the poet's genius rises above particular details by an abstraction looking to the universal. They depart from reality for yet another reason. This is the demand of comedy itself as it was then conceived; for it was not content with moderate ridicule, but called for droll exaggeration. All the fictitious creatures of the comic poets needed, therefore, to magnify at least some of their characteristic traits far beyond what was possible in nature. The peasant's passion for his personal tranquillity in Dicæopolis, the love of economy in Strepsiades, the very baseness of the demagogue in Cleon, are thus pushed to excess. The exaggeration in them has something grandiose about it. The poet's imagination designedly seeks an ideal such as one would expect in the Old Comedy.

Nevertheless, this does not prevent his having, if not observation in the strict sense, at least a vivid intuition of reality. It appears that this is one of the matters in which Aristophanes was superior to Cratinus. His typical figures are strongly individualized, and that with a remarkable delicacy of touch. Dicæopolis has a critical, independent spirit. He is fond of good cheer, naturally joyful, and roguish; alert and quick, he is a true peasant of Mount Parnes, gaunt in body, agile, always moving, a man whose words are acted rather than spoken. Strepsiades is older and more morose and dissatisfied; he is credulous and cunning at the same time; inventive, yet incapable of understanding what transcends his experience. He is economical, keenly alive to his interests, and honest at heart, although the pressure of the debts he must pay makes him try dishonest means of escape. As the head of the family, he is both feeble and authoritative. Bdelycleon, Pithetarus, Lysistrata, Praxagora, and Chremylus each have their individual traits. If they had part in a more commonplace action, these would suffice to mark them as wholly like ourselves; and the comedy of exuberant fancy would become the comedy of character, of which it contains the germ. The mad extravagance to which it is devoted prevents this; nevertheless, each of these droll personages is a clearly conceived individual.

This excellent realism of the personages is shown, not only in



their sentiments and manners, but also in the environment in which they live. Aristophanes excelled in giving, by means of brief expressions mingled with the chant or the dialogue, a thousand just and exact descriptive phrases that make his comedy vivid and real. Dicæopolis, leading the Dionysiac procession around the court in front of his house, presents before our eyes the image of a rustic festival; Strepsiades, turning back his thoughts regretfully to the store of provisions once filling his home, transports us from Athens to the little paternal domain where he grew up to become a man; the laborers of the *Peace* portray for us familiar scenes of village life, reunions where the neighbors assemble, and the peaceful, leisurely conversation which they enjoy over their cups. It is from these plays, in fact, that one can obtain the greatest number of delicate, precise indications regarding the life of Athens and Attica during the second half of the fifth century.

**5. His Lyric Passage. His Language.**—In the hands of such a poet, what will the lyric passages be like? He had a vivid imagination, gayety, frolicsomeness, and the most delicate sense of rhythm. These are the dominant qualities of his lyric poetry. His chants seem as if improvised. It is a spontaneous, capricious poetry, brilliant and easy, uniting the most charming simplicity with polished lustre and grandeur. Deep inspiration is rare in the chants; but sincerity and vivacity of impression are everywhere manifest.

Satiric couplets abound. The aggressive, light, petulant type of song was as truly Greek as it is French; but in Greece it was more like the popular, Dionysiac iamb, more like a revel, more playful. Aristophanes showed unusual skill in this type of composition. We cannot cite examples here; for personal mockeries almost always need a commentary, and that would make them seem heavy. They are, however, abundant: now a biting allusion, half concealed beneath ingenious allegory, now a series of droll jests, apparently incoherent, but containing fine expressions, puns, and amusing figures. It is easy to see how much these merry snatches of song, with their air of life and appropriateness, must have amused the people. This explains also why they have lost so much of their charm to-day.

The really durable lyric passages are those which manifest the grace of his imagination. Let us note particularly those that show his love of nature. This man, who seems to have lived only for the city, must have had a sincere, ardent love of the country and its life. Who can read, without the keenest pleasure, the appeal which, in the *Birds*, the hoopoe addresses, across prairies and forests, to the whole winged tribe? Finesse is here united in a charming manner



with free play of invention; a thousand details are found, yet one has finally the sensation of free space, even to the distant horizon:—

“Quick, quick, this way, this way, all ye who fly as I do; this way, ye who rove on the husbandman’s fertile fields, a multitudinous tribe of barley-eaters, swift-winged, shrill-voiced robbers, gathering seeds on this side and on that; this way, ye who, in the furrow, leaping from clod to clod, utter gently your joyous cry: tio, tio; this way, familiar visitants of the garden, perched on twigs of ivy; and ye, who make your nests in the mountains, who go, marauding, to the wild olive or the arbutue tree, come quickly to my call. . . .”

This is nimble, light, leaping; but the general plan of the passage is simple, and the impressions of detail, howsoever distinct, are thoroughly mingled in one concrete general impression.

Nor is dignity lacking, though he aims in general rather to be graceful and amiable. Whenever the subject makes it possible, his imagination sees splendid visions. When the chorus of the Clouds sing behind the scene before showing themselves to Socrates, the poet, in a few words, discloses to us the marvellous spectacle of the world lit by the sun:—

“Everlasting Clouds, let us rise high in air and display our soft, wavy vapors. From the bosom of Ocean, our father, from the midst of the resounding waves, let us mount to the lofty, tree-covered summits of the hills. Thence shall we see the sacred earth bearing its fruit, the divine rivers and their noisy waves, and the sea, with its dull murmur. The sun, like an eye ever open in the depths of ether, is shining in all its splendor. Let us throw off the misty vapors that enshroud us and, revealing our immortal forms, look, with infinite power of sight, down on the face of the earth.”

Finally, sometimes there is even emotion in this poetry, though it is created to accompany laughter. We cannot cite here the second parabasis of the *Peace*, as it is too long, and loses greatly by being separated from its context. Suffice it to remark how delicious is the laborer’s dream, when he sees the war coming to a close and is to return to his field. Beneath the light playfulness, one cannot but recognize the natural relish of the poet for the things he describes. The few passages of the sort that might be cited, however, are quite exceptional. In general, the lyric spirit of Aristophanes lies in the tone of his comedy, and is intimately connected therewith. Its merit lies in the ease of its development and the admirable variety of character it possesses.

This is also the merit of the language spoken by his characters. It represents the perfection of Attic familiar speech. Contemporaries thought they could discern in it imitation of Euripides; and even Aristophanes, though a sworn adversary of the great tragic

poet, did not absolutely deny the reproach, or eulogy, of borrowing from him certain graces of style. But the real model of Aristophanes was the conversation of contemporary Athenians. He excelled in reproducing its lively turns, its free movement, its delicacy and variety, and that with a simple elegance which seemed to cost him no effort. Natural, yet piquant, grace was his true merit; and none of his contemporaries seems to have possessed it to the same extent. He could not be better characterized as a writer than by applying to him the pretty verses from one of his fragments, where he says of a certain person, "He speaks the language of the middle class in the city, without the soft affectation of the élite citizens, and without the coarseness of the ignorant."

The comic and dramatic qualities of this language are those chiefly deserving notice. It is remarkably adroit in word-play. In comic dialogue, it does not fear to descend to absurd puns. To our taste, this is a sufficiently small merit, yet perhaps not so for the public taste of the time. There is more reason for praising its invention. It is an invention of words, uncouth compounds, and effects of every sort, resulting from surprises and comparisons. All this, however, belongs rather to the type of composition than to the poet. His really personal merit is in the vivacity of his diction and the flexibility of the turns. No one could better form a phrase or emphasize a trait, bring together a pleasing accumulation of words, or put them in opposition. It is not enough to say that his dialogue is full of life and movement; every phrase is a characteristic; every word provokes a laugh. Hence his flexible, sparkling style was remarkably well adapted to the situations and the characters. Read in the *Knights* the pleasing scene where the slave, Demosthenes, puts the sausage-seller through a preliminary examination to determine that, since he knows nothing, he is fit to become a statesman (v. 150 ff.). The sausage-seller, surprised and yet timid, is quite astonished at what he hears — petty questions, doubts, artless exclamations, rather gestures and play of physiognomy than words. He both does and does not believe. He is there, half-defiant, half-convinced, in the hands of the droll creature who impels him on. The latter, on the contrary, uses clear, short phrases, the air of a master, categorical assertions, and with this, when necessary, the insinuating word that dispels doubt, excites ambition, encourages, or commands. The language thus becomes a means of indicating character; it describes the personage who uses it.

These observations give the idea that one needs to keep in mind about Aristophanes. His art is as clever as his genius; it serves him without controlling him. Both give indication of one of the

most fertile, free, graceful imaginations that can be conceived, associated with the vividest, keenest intelligence and the readiest discernment of the ridiculous.

**6. Contemporaries of Aristophanes. Eupolis. End of Old Comedy.** — Around Aristophanes were grouped a number of poets who were his rivals. Their works are lost, but were more or less like his own. Almost thirty names might be mentioned; but only three have kept celebrity and deserve more than to be passed in silence. These are Eupolis, Phrynichus, and Plato.

Eupolis, an Athenian, was almost the equal of Aristophanes in genius and reputation. Born not long before 445, he brought out his first play in 429. For nearly twenty years his success was brilliant. He is said to have composed fourteen, or seventeen, comedies; and seven times he won the first prize. In 411 he perished in a shipwreck, while taking part in a military expedition. His most important plays were: the *Goats* (423), in which he opposed the rude, simple manners of rustic goatherds to the soft effeminacy of the élite Athenians; the *Maricas* (420), a violent attack against the demagogue Hyperbolus, Cleon's successor; and the *Demes*, whose date is uncertain. In this play he called from the depths of Hades several of the great men of Athens to teach the people a lesson. In it were found the celebrated verses on the eloquence of Pericles: —

“He was the ablest of men in speech. When he appeared before the people, his conduct was that of a runner: he took ten paces in advance of other orators and surpassed them all in eloquence. He was, indeed, a swift runner. What is more, he possessed the gift of persuasion. It sat upon his lips. His speech was the essence of charm; and alone among orators, he could leave a sting in the soul of his auditors.”

Let us mention yet his *Baptæ*, represented probably in 415, in which the audacious poet lashed the votaries of the Thracian goddess Cottyto, and with them Alcibiades, who was then very powerful.

Although Eupolis seems to have had the same beliefs as Aristophanes, they were friendly for only a short time. As early as 420, they quarrelled over some literary matters which it is impossible to-day to elucidate. According to the accounts of ancient critics, Eupolis was endowed with inventive genius, fertile and graceful imagination, and, like Cratinus, was aggressive and biting in attack. Though as intellectual as Aristophanes, he seems to have been less moderate, and so, on the whole, inferior.

Phrynichus is far from being so well known. His dramatic career extends from about 435 to 405. His chief play was the *Misanthrope* (*Μονότροπος*), with which, in 414, he competed against the *Birds* of Aristophanes, obtaining only the third prize.

Plato, surnamed the Comic to distinguish him from the philosopher, seems to have been the youngest of this group of poets. He obtained his most brilliant successes during the second part of the Peloponnesian War and in the years that followed. Like Aristophanes, he often attacked contemporary statesmen, notably Cleophon. But the dominant element in his plays was parody. The importance and the lustre which he could give to such composition have caused him to be classed sometimes as a poet of the Middle Comedy.

With these various poets and their contemporaries, the Old Comedy reached its zenith. This was very near its close, at the end of the century. The causes of its swift decline are not well understood. The ancients explained it by a law imposing silence on the chorus through divesting it of the right of satire; it was said, too, that after the war, the impoverished citizens were no longer able to meet the expenses of the various choregia. Neither of the explanations is wholly satisfactory, as they both are limited to a passing state of events. Liberty can be crushed for an instant; but if it had been demanded by public opinion, nothing could have hindered it from springing up afresh at Athens in the fourth century; and as for the impoverishment mentioned, that was neither universal nor long-continued. Hence the true causes for the transformation must be sought elsewhere. It seems that one might discover three leading causes.

First, the greater sensitiveness of public spirit. At the end of the Peloponnesian War, the democracy had had a rude experience. When it was reestablished, it became more defiant. The strifes of orators and the multiplicity of public accusations go to prove this. Under such conditions, a direct satire of current politics by the theatre was impossible. It would have set the political parties wrangling on the spot.

In the second place, the type of composition was gradually exhausted. Its fantastic inventions were condemned by their nature to lose their effectiveness. The public probably began to weary of them when the representations were interrupted by the events of 404. It seemed impossible to return to earlier conditions.

The most important of these causes was probably the gradual transformation of public taste and spirit. It is certain that the fourth century, on the whole, gave preference to fine and delicate reason rather than to the fantasies of the imagination. It was an epoch of



philosophy, moral observation, and dialectic. All in all, moderate qualities predominated over the others. The tendency was directly opposed to that of the Old Comedy. Men lost their liking for its hyperbolas, buffooneries, violence, and coarseness. And we shall see later that the new forms of comic composition were precisely those most agreeable to the new tendency of public opinion.

## CHAPTER XVI

### CLASSICAL IONIC PROSE: HERODOTUS

1. General View.
2. Herodotus: his Life; his Career.
3. Science in Herodotus.
4. Art in Herodotus.
5. Ion of Chios.
6. Ctesias.
7. Philosophy: Democritus.
8. Medicine: Hippocrates.

**1. General View.** — The period of Greek drama is contemporary with that of the Athenian primacy in the Greek world. From the Persian Wars to the end of the Peloponnesian War, Athens was the richest city in Greece, the most populous, the most powerful at sea, the most important politically, and the one in which art attained its most brilliant splendor. After the dithyrambic and dramatic poetry, prose began to develop there with incomparable vigor and maturity under the three forms of oratory, history and philosophy. Ionic till then, it was to become chiefly Attic; and in the dialect of Athens, more or less altered by time and circumstance, its works were to be written henceforth till the close of antiquity.

Ionia did not yield to her younger sister without a struggle, however, her old priority in the art of writing prose. During the half century that corresponds to the earliest period of Attic prose, Ionic prose literature continued to live and even to show some brilliance. It is the time of Herodotus, Democritus, and Hippocrates. The general progress of thought, centring in Athens, was felt throughout the Greek world; and the writers whose names have just been mentioned are as classic as those of Athens. They also kept, with a maturity characteristic of their time, many traits peculiar to their race; and this is what one must seek in their writings. We shall join to these great names those of a few other less important writers belonging to the same group.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Herodotus: his Life; his Career.**<sup>2</sup> — Herodotus was born in 480

<sup>1</sup> There is almost no Doric prose. The Pythagorean Philolaus, and Archytas, who wrote in the Doric dialect, have nothing at all extant; the fragments we have as coming from them are more than doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** The editions of Dindorf; Gaisford, Oxford, 4 vols., 1824; Stein, Berlin, 1852–1862; Abicht, Leipsic, 1861–1866, IV–VI; Macan, London, 2 vols., 1895; Bähr, Leipsic, 4 vols., 1856, I–III; Sayce, London, 1883.

English translations by Rawlinson, London, 4 vols., 1880, with introduction and notes; Macan, London, 2 vols., 1890; Macaulay, London, 2 vols., 1895; and Holder, 2 vols., 1886.

Consult: The introductions of Stein and Abicht; and the important work of A. Hauvette, *Hérodote historien des guerres médiques*, Paris, 1894.

at Halicarnassus, a city of Carian origin afterward colonized by the Dorians, but completely permeated with the civilization of the great Ionic cities of the region. An inscription of the time shows that the dialect of Halicarnassus was then purely Ionic. His family was rich and noble, and devoted to letters. Among his near relatives was found the celebrated epic poet Panyasis, who told in verse the story of Heracles and that of the Ionian migrations. In such an environment, Herodotus could not but take an interest in ancient history and poetry, and learn respect for religion. He was scarcely twenty when he found himself engaged, like his kinsman Panyasis, in the political struggle of the national party against the house of Lygdamis II. The struggle was conducted with varied and rather doubtful success; in the course of it, Panyasis lost his life. Herodotus, after a short exile in Samos and a temporary return to his country, departed again, owing perhaps to new difficulties, in 454. It was probably then that he began his celebrated travels. In Egypt, he went as far as Elephantine; in Persia, a little beyond Susa; toward the north, as far as the Cimmerian Bosphorus — as we learn from his own statements. He also visited Phœnicia, the Cyrenaica, Cyprus, and various parts of the Greek world, not to speak of Magna Græcia, where we shall find him before long.

Already the idea of his work was beginning to form in his mind. A tradition represents him at Athens in 446, giving a public reading of some of his tales, and receiving from the city, on the proposition of Anytus, a reward of ten talents.<sup>1</sup> It is certain that Herodotus was much devoted to Athens, for he probably resided there a long time, and returned more than once. In 440 Sophocles addressed to him an elegy. Pericles is magnificently celebrated in his works.

When the city of Thurii was founded in Magna Græcia, in 444, by a pan-Hellenic emigration organized at Athens, Herodotus became a citizen of the new colony. We know that he returned to Athens, for he saw the Propylæa completed (431). But it is possible that after 444 he lived chiefly at Thurii, writing his *History* there. It was probably at Thurii that he died. His death must be placed in the first years of the Peloponnesian War, — in 426 or 425, judging from indications to be found in his works.

His history recounts the struggle between Greeks and barbarians from Croesus to Xerxes, with a multitude of digressions and retrogressions, which almost make it an ample picture of Greek and barbarian antiquity in the eastern Mediterranean. There are to-day

<sup>1</sup> Diyllus, in Plutarch, *The Malignity of Herodotus*, c. 26. There are apocryphal anecdotes of the presence of Thucydides at the time; and again at another reading at Olympia.

nine books, each of which bears, in the manuscripts, the name of a Muse. According to Lucian, after a complete reading of his works at Olympia, the Greeks, in an impulse of admiration, designated thus the several books composing it.<sup>1</sup> The legendary character of the anecdote is self-evident. Modern scholars have spent much erudition in discussing certain questions relative to the present state of the work: Is it finished? Was it written all at once, or can one distinguish portions belonging to different years? and if so, how far are the parts fused into a harmonious whole? Without entering into complicated discussions, let us say that the work, finished or unfinished, has the appearance of a whole, and that, if the different parts were probably composed in widely separated periods of his life, they were still written with a definite plan in view, so as to occupy the place that is theirs to-day. This is all that is really worth determining.

**3. Science in Herodotus.** — Herodotus has often been called the “Father of History.” No title could be more just if one means to say that he composed the first historical work which left a durable impression on the memory of later times and really became classic. But one would be greatly mistaken in concluding that he wrote history at all in the sense that a modern writer would conceive. In literature, as in all else, the human mind advances rather by successive steps than leaps. Herodotus is intermediate between the logographers and Thucydides, who, in turn, was surpassed by Polybius in certain ways; and even Polybius differs from modern writers. The evolution has been wrought with slow regularity.

Like the logographers and the poets, Herodotus wished above all to shed a brilliant light upon the great exploits of antiquity. He says so frankly in his first words. He cares less for the positive utility of exact knowledge of the facts — which is the point of view of Thucydides — than for the glorification of “splendid and strange deeds.” Like the logographers, he abounds in anecdotes, romantic legends, and myths. History, thus conceived, makes the transition between epic, which had grown old, and romance, which was still unborn.

But there are new elements. First, the distant past is no longer the principal theme of the narrative; it figures only as an episode. The body of the work treats boldly a period almost contemporary; Herodotus begins almost at once the narration of historic events. Then, besides the romantic anecdotes, positive facts become more numerous. Geography assumes greater importance in the work: and war and politics form its essential basis.

<sup>1</sup> Lucian, *Herodotus*, 1.



The spirit and method of the history change along with the matter. Herodotus was the first to seek the law that binds his facts together. He aims to write a work of original research and criticism. Even in the first line, he notifies the reader of the change: "This," says he, "is the account of the researches made by Herodotus of Halicarnassus" (*ἱστορίης ἀποδείξις ἦδε*). The word *ἱστορίη*, which was to become the name for the type, though new at that time, and properly signifying investigation, implies a whole programme. He knows and declares that the investigation must be made with care and circumspection,<sup>1</sup> to say nothing of the sincerity that is indispensable.

Such are his principles. How has he applied them?

We may leave aside the question of sincerity. In spite of certain attacks of Ctesias and Plutarch, who are too professional or too uncertain in their censure; in spite even of the fierce polemic recently waged by modern scholars against his good faith,—one may assert that it is above suspicion. Not only has it never been proved that, in the account of his travels, he was the exaggerator that some have accused him of being; but the contrary appears true on the face of things. Even in the narration of political events, where the influence of party spirit might *a priori* be admitted more easily, few historians appear to have been more nearly exempt from it. He was protected against such prejudices by a lively, always interested, readily sympathetic, curiosity, and by a smiling philosophy, enabling him to see with ease the ludicrous as well as the meritorious side of human character. This does not by any means imply, however, that he was never deceived.

Among the facts he reports, he loves to distinguish those he has found out himself from those he knows only by hearsay. His method is good. When he speaks as an eye-witness, one can discover in his descriptions occasional easily explained errors of detail; but in general his impressions are vivid and just. The appearance of the Delta and the Pyramids, the overflow of the Nile, papyrus, the plains of Babylon, furnish him themes for excellent pictures. When he speaks of what he has heard, the problem is more complicated. His work is a *résumé* of the whole ancient world. To inform himself on all these things, so difficult to comprehend, from what sources has he drawn his information?

The history of Egypt, Assyria, and Persia was preserved largely in inscriptions, which modern science is deciphering. There was in Persia a series of royal parchments, containing a summary of the official acts, which, later, Ctesias was permitted to consult. But Herodotus

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, II, 45.

had no access to these sources of information. He had to be content with questioning the people of the country, preferably those who were thought most learned, the priests of the sanctuaries, the sacristans, and the dragomans. For the ancient history of Greece, he could employ the accounts of poets, logographers, and the sanctuaries, with their rich treasures of offerings, and with the explanations always given by their keepers. For the history of the Persian Wars, he had the sanctuaries at his disposal, then the archives of the cities, and particularly the oral traditions, still vivid, which needed only to be given form in long narratives. For his knowledge of the various countries, besides the writings of Hecataeus and his own travels, he could make use of accounts related to him by travellers.

The common character of all these sources is manifest. Written or oral, they have almost all a popular element which is incomplete and untrustworthy. The product obtained is a mass of unverified statements, facts important and unimportant, things minutely exact or naively marvellous by turns, and well-remembered incidents and legends. With admirable zeal and perseverance, he gathered this material; and the abundance of his information is prodigious. He even attempted criticism, and succeeded as far as was possible for a Greek of the fifth century, who was naturally cautious, prudent, and wary, yet imaginative and, on the whole, credulous and uncritical. He constantly relates traditions respecting which he formally declines responsibility. He cites his authorities, and leaves the reader to judge between two or three different forms of the same tale. When he undertakes the discussion himself, he shows good sense, reserve, and wide experience. Where these gifts are sufficient, he is excellent — but they are not always so. Sometimes questions pertain to the general principles of science; sometimes they demand for their solution a special, technical preparation. Aside from certain simple, superficial differences between Greek and barbarian, Persian and Scythian, Egyptian and Thracian, he scarcely conceives more than one kind of disposition, which is his own and that of the Greeks of his time. He is ignorant that very antique stories are more improbable as they are more detailed. In the matter of miracles, if he admits some and rejects others, it does not appear clearly on what principles he bases his opinion: he does not believe that doves ever speak: yet he does not think it incredible that a mare should give birth to a rabbit. Oracles inspire in him great respect, particularly when they come from Delphi. From all this, evidently, there could arise only a work in which the results are of very unequal scientific value.

In geography, it is not possible to believe that his wide travels were unfruitful; but it is certain that, in things which he did not

see for himself, such as the Cassiterides or the sources of the Danube, he was not always capable of choosing, among the opinions of his time, the one which conformed most closely to the truth. Perhaps Hecataeus was his superior in some respects.

On the ancient history of the Orient, one may characterize his work in a word: he wrote the legendary and popular history. M. Maspéro has said excellently concerning him, "The monuments tell or will tell some day what Cheops, Ramses, or Thothmes really did; Herodotus tells us what was said of them in the streets of Memphis."<sup>1</sup> Likewise he tells us what was said of Ninus and Semiramis in the streets of Babylon. To do him justice, he rendered to the knowledge of history no inconsiderable service by his frank, diligent investigations.

In what he wrote concerning the more recent Orient, the part of truth is evidently greater. Yet we must not overlook the fact that, in the centuries antedating science, legends sprang up almost immediately after the events of which they treated had occurred. His history of Cyrus is partly fabulous; and his Cræsus is often like one of the Seven Sages.

The same observations apply in some measure even to the accounts of things in Greece. For the ancient period this is self-evident. With the more recent periods, the history gains much in solidity, as is shown by the clearness of the narrative. His events are connected naturally; and one may affirm that, on the whole, his history of the Persian War is authentic. But though the body of the narrative merits credence, the detail is sometimes of less value. Too many oracles are fulfilled; there are too many apparitions of heroes, too many miracles, too many interpretations made after the event has come to pass, too much precision in accounts of things that could have had but few witnesses. His accounts of battles are picturesque, psychological, epic, rather than military or technical. Politics is treated in its external, final manifestations, rather than in the causes leading up to its events. He sketches justly the moral attitude of Themistocles or Aristides, but cannot discern profoundly their point of view.

Yet he seeks, as we have said, to bring philosophy to bear on history; he believes in the existence of a law governing events. But it is a wholly religious law; it operates from the outside, from above, not from within, from the conditions themselves. It is the old law of religious and poetic morals, the law of Nemesis. Every fault brings on punishment — particularly pride, the unpardonable fault. The defeats of Xerxes are due to pride. The moral and

<sup>1</sup> *Annuaire des Études grecques*, 1878, p. 172.

poetic beauty of this conception, so much like that of Bossuet, is manifest. But one sees, too, how far it is removed from the really scientific search for immediate causes, which alone interested Thucydides and Polybius.

**4. Art in Herodotus.**—The art of Herodotus presents, like his science, a character intermediate between that of the logographers, his predecessors, and that of the great historians who followed him. He is classic in the perfection to which he brought a certain type of historical narrative; but the type is more like that of Charon or Hecataeus than like that of Thucydides.

His methods of exposition are essentially like those of his predecessors. In his narratives, side by side with the account of essential facts, one constantly finds short romances in miniature. In the discourses spoken by his characters, he is less interested in analyzing their historical motives than in making them talk with amplitude and grace, like heroes of epic or romance. Then, from one end of his work to the other, he is always present, judging persons and things, discussing oracles, giving his opinion upon every matter with simplicity and acumen, like Montaigne. All this is amiable; but it belongs to an art still primitive, not yet thoroughly aware of the conditions to which it should conform, as the exact and scrupulous interpreter of science.

Let us come now to what, in an artistic work of history, is independent even of the subject-matter to be expressed: the invention and the style.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus has very judiciously summed up the originality of Herodotus's composition.<sup>1</sup> The old logographers, treating a subject very limited, needed only to arrange their facts in series. They wrote chronicles, but did not really "invent." Herodotus embraced in his work an immense and very complicated subject. To bring it into order and unity, he needed both to deduce a governing idea, one capable of organizing the confused mass of facts, and to create a vivid image from the whole. This was his work as an artist, as a writer of epic. He adhered to a leading idea, and made all the rest subordinate. This was the strife between Greeks and barbarians from Cræsus to Xerxes. He shadowed it forth in the first lines, and remained faithful to his purpose. Hence there is in his history, as in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, a true unity of action. But as in Homer, it is developed without haste or rigor. It does not hurry to a resolution like drama, but makes its way thither slowly and freely through episodes and digressions. The author is fully aware of his romance-like freedom, which, though wandering,

<sup>1</sup> *Critique on Thucydides*, 5.



is still restrained. He often speaks of his digressions. The first book is a fine example of an art in appearance capricious, yet careful never to go wholly astray. After stating his theme, the Strife between Greeks and Barbarians, he recounts its legendary causes, and then comes to Cræsus. This is the real beginning of the history; and he dwells upon the fact. He glances over the predecessors of Cræsus, then returns to the preparations for the struggle which the king of Lydia is about to undertake against the Persians. Where the alliance of Sparta and Athens is sought, there is a digression on these two cities. When Cyrus enters on the scene, there is another digression dealing with Persia; and in connection with Persia, still others dealing with Ionia and Babylon. This constitutes the first book. The second is a digression on Egypt, in connection with the story of Cambyses. A part of the fourth is a digression on Scythia in connection with the account about Darius; and so on to the end. Yet there is a difference between the first six books and the last three: in the latter the digressions are shorter; the continuity of the prominent lines is more manifest as soon as the decisive struggle begins. Similarly, in the *Odyssey*, the actors are brought together at the close for the final struggle, and the action proceeds with a more regular movement. The composition of Herodotus, however, is not wholly like any other. Before his time, no art of composition existed; after that, under the influence of rhetoric, its development was more rapid and methodical. In him a last ray of epic poesy colors and illuminates the story. There is a singular charm, even to-day, in letting oneself be carried along on this pretty, sinuous stream, which flows slowly past agreeable and varied windings and numerous tributaries, that one ascends and explores. The course is not swift and direct to the destination, nor is there a methodic exploration of the country; but one glides along through interesting landscapes, at the foot of strange old cities, and eventually gets a just idea of the region as a whole.

His style was no less novel. All the logographers, we are told, wrote in nearly the same way; but Herodotus was personal. He was the first prose writer, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who gave Greece the idea that a fine expression in prose could have the worth of a verse of poetry.<sup>1</sup> All the ancient critics laud his captivating sweetness, his charm, his grandeur, and his religious gravity. He is styled "quite Homeric."<sup>2</sup> Nobility and charm are, indeed, his; but he does not excel in the strictly oratorical qualities of Thucydides or Demosthenes. Everything in his writing tends to attractiveness. The dialect is Ionic in its basis, but less like

<sup>1</sup> Dionysius, *Critique on Theoc.* 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Treatise on the Sublime*, 13.

the spoken language than that of his predecessors, often containing, we are told, forms borrowed from other sources to enrich and embellish it; and the vocabulary is very simple and concrete, but colored with a tinge of nobility and beauty by an admixture of terms or formulas borrowed from epic poetry, religious parlance, or the language of the oracles. But above all, the sentence-structure is new and typical. It is of polished simplicity. The sentences are often short, yet sometimes long, though not by that periodic arrangement of members which makes them a living whole, animated by irresistible movement and filled with intense oratorical passion. Such sentences did not exist before the time of Lysias and Isocrates. The long sentences in Herodotus are made so by juxtaposition, full, easy, flowing, discreetly animated with poetic rhythms that are almost concealed and give the reader an undefined sensation like that of music.<sup>1</sup> Long or short, however, they all proceed with a gentle, even slow, movement. The dominant tone is that of familiar good humor. The movement of the sentence is fairly spontaneous. When the tone rises, the rhythm of the sentence expresses the writer's emotion by the sententious turn of the language, which, with the gravity of an oracle, utters formulas teeming with significance.

Although there are numerous discourses in the history, and some of them very beautiful, one can appreciate the commendation given by the ancients to Thucydides for having been the first to compose true speeches — *δημηγορίαι*. The speeches of Herodotus resemble more closely conversation; and the beauty of the most eloquent is poetic or lyric rather than oratorical.

Some of the narratives are very pretty and even dramatic, owing to the depth of their emotion; but he excels chiefly in picturesque description, in simple and rather romantic narratives, in all that, to be really superior, does not need a maturity of thought and a vigor of intellect still foreign to his art. His description of the battle of Salamis is less vigorous than the one by Æschylus. That of the battle of Marathon is more connected than that of Salamis, and is besides less burdened with extraneous matter. Yet it is easy to imagine what Polybius or Thucydides would have added in the way of technical precision, or subtracted in the way of miracle. On the other hand, the enumeration of the troops of Xerxes, with their bizarre costumes and the strange variety of their armor, is a passage that only Herodotus could have written.<sup>2</sup> The same could be said of a multitude of anecdotes, descriptions of landscapes, monuments, or manners, and stories of miracles. In these he gave his ever wakeful curiosity free play, with a grace of imagination and a

<sup>1</sup> Demetrius, *De Elocutione*, 181.

<sup>2</sup> VII, 61-99.

clearness of insight and expression that make his work delightful. This work initiated the period of prose masterpieces. But above all it marked the end of an age; it was the crowning work of the logographers. It was the finest product of the close of Ionic civilization, at the time when Atticism, being more vigorous and active, became dominant. Antiquity was to offer no second example of history wholly engaged, so to speak, in epic poetry — popular, vivid, with a droll mixture of scientific alertness, romantic imagination, good humor, acute discernment, and candid piety. It was to hear no longer a language that united so originally, in perfectly natural simplicity, the most exquisite artlessness with the gravity of an elegiac poem.

5. **Ion of Chios.**<sup>1</sup> — The tragic poet Ion of Chios was also a prose writer and somewhat of a historian. Born between 484 and 481, he resided for many years at Athens, where he formed the acquaintance of most of the famous men of the time. Besides tragedies, he wrote in Ionic prose a history of the *Foundation of Chios* (Χίου κτίσις), whose title recalls the works of the logographers; a treatise on the creation of things, entitled *Triads* (Τριάδοι), in which he recognized only three elements; and a more original collection of interesting *Memoirs* (ὑπομνήματα), of which we have particularly a pleasing page concerning Sophocles. The latter are amiable reminiscences, anecdotes expressive of gentle good humor, written in somewhat careless Ionic prose, though graceful in effect. The very short fragments make us regret the loss of the remainder.

6. **Ctesias.**<sup>2</sup> — We return to history proper with Ctesias. Born in Cnidus, in the second half of the fifth century, he belonged to a fraternity of Asclepiads, who practised medicine. Some unknown circumstance made him a prisoner of war in the hands of the Persians. He became a court physician at Susa, and lived there seventeen years in great honor, having access to the official archives and writing books about the Orient. As physician of Artaxerxes, he was present at the battle of Cunaxa in 401. Various writings, historical, geographical, medical, are attributed to him. The most celebrated were a *History of Persia* (Περσικά), and a *Description of India* (Ἰνδικά). We have but the merest fragments of his works, but the ancients often spoke of them. As a writer, he was said to be charming, clear, and amiable, but slightly prolix. As a historian, he had the merit of knowing many things, and the serious defect of lacking scientific

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Græc.* II. sup. cit.; and in Allègre, *De Ione Chio*, Paris, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> Fragments in Müller, *Ctesiae Cnidii Reliquiae*, following the Herodotus in the Didot Collection; also edited by Gilmore, London, 1888.

insight. The value and interest of his *Persian History* is that he was able to read the royal parchments (διφθέραι βασιλικαί) in the archives at Susa. Unfortunately, he exaggerated greatly and did not always tell the truth; for example, he asserts that he saw with his own eyes certain fantastic animals of India, or certain semi-miraculous acts. This casts doubt upon the rest of his work. Yet when he says that he has seen things, his account is not necessarily false; and he had, indeed, seen things of great interest, as in the campaign of Cunaxa. On the Persian manners of the time, on the palace of Artaxerxes, on the chronicles of the courts and the intrigues of the seraglio, on military events judged from a Persian point of view, he is a witness worthy of attention, if not always of credence. This explains his great success. Not only did Diodorus copy him in part; but Plutarch also, who judges him severely, laid him under heavy contributions for his life of Artaxerxes. A sort of Herodotus, but venturesome and untrustworthy, he is not devoid of merit, yet justifies at once the *Græcia mendax* of Juvenal.

7. **Philosophy: Democritus.**<sup>1</sup>—Among the philosophers of the time who used the Ionic dialect, one might class the sophist Protagoras; but his great rôle as a sophist compels us to study him along with the others. Accordingly we shall defer the study of his work to a later chapter. Democritus, on the contrary, is one of the principal philosophers of this Ionic group.

He was born at Abdera about 460. Possibly it was there he learned to know Leucippus, who is sometimes regarded as a native of that place, and who invented the atomic theory. Democritus travelled over Egypt, Asia, and Greece, talking with the learned men, particularly the mathematicians, whom he found little capable, however, of giving him information; and above all he observed nature. When he came to Athens, he was not well understood. He died old: at ninety, according to some, at a hundred, according to others,—consequently in the second quarter of the fourth century.

His writings were very numerous. The chief appear to have been that entitled *Μέγας διάκοσμος*, in which his system of nature was set forth; and a treatise on the equilibrium of the soul (*Περὶ εἰδυμίας*), which was his masterpiece in morals. Of all these books, we have only some short, but interesting, fragments.

His system is known from the analyses of it found in Aristotle. Like Leucippus, he saw the principle of all things in atoms, infinite in number, eternal, indivisible, alike in quality, but different in shape and size. These atoms move about in the void, and by grouping themselves in various ways, form the particular objects of exist-

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* I, pp. 330-382.



ence. According to him the soul is a fire composed of very subtile atoms. There is a soul belonging to the entire universe. The gods of mythology do not exist any more than does the ordering Spirit of Anaxagoras, or the God-Providence of Socrates; but one may admit that souls superior to those of men, the εἰδωλα, that one may see fit to call gods, have their abode in space and sometimes influence our destiny.

In morals, he advocated, like Xenophon and almost all other Greeks, the pursuit of happiness through cultivation of the reasoning faculties, moderation of desires, and preference of soul over body. He evinces in every line a penetrating, acute, sometimes even lofty, mind. He is a careful observer of life, a trifle egotistic and perhaps cold; but he is intelligent enough to understand that egotism is not itself sufficient, and that the best means of being happy is to go sometimes beyond oneself.

A keen moralist, he was also a good writer. The ancients often praised his style. His fragments, which are short, comprise chiefly maxims and general truths that have a brilliant, sententious turn. He cannot always have written thus; yet one discerns, in the passages relating to physics, that he must have proceeded generally by dogmatic, peremptory assertions, not by dialectical discussions. In this and in the general trend of his doctrine, he is indeed the successor of the first Ionians—a survivor, as it were, of the ancient method in the age of Socrates and the sophists. One can understand how, when he visited Athens, people let him pass unnoticed.

The few thoughts following may give an idea of his sententious, witty manner:—

“Cold and heat are mere conventions: in the real world, there is nothing but atoms and the void.”

“We do not really know: truth lies in the depths of the abyss.”

“True happiness comes from having a soul joyful in poverty; unhappiness comes from having a soul discontented amidst riches.”

“Goodness consists not in abstaining from injustice, but in not willing to be unjust.”

“Bodily beauty is an advantage worthy only of the brutes whom no intelligence exalts.”

“Better not live than be without some good friend.”

“A life without a festival is a long road without an inn.”

**8. Medicine: Hippocrates.**<sup>1</sup> — By the side of philosophy, medicine obtained an important place in Ionic civilization, and was, besides, connected with philosophy by very close ties.

<sup>1</sup> Editions by Littré, 10 vols., Paris, 1839–1861, with introduction, various essays, notes, and French translation; and by Ilberg and Kühlewein, Leipzig, Teubner, 1894, and years following, — with important prolegomena.

Medicine was a very ancient science in Greece. Even in the Homeric poems, the Greek army was accompanied by Podalirius and Machaon, sons of Asclepias, the son of Apollo. Apollo is often a god of healing. Asclepias is preëminently the healing god. Restoration to health was sought in his sanctuaries at Cnidus, Cos, Rhodes, and Cyrene. Around these were formed, at an early date, medical brotherhoods with members bearing the title of Asclepiads. These were neither priests of the temples nor descendants of a single mythic family, but lay physicians, united in a corporation organized by the god, who were at liberty to go and practise their art where they chose. The art naturally consisted largely of empirical formulas and mysterious rites. But in the fifth century, the philosophers often attacked medical problems in a freer way, with a more scientific spirit. The Pythagorean Philolaus, together with Empedocles, Diogenes of Apollonia, Anaxagoras, and Democritus often directed thither their penetrating thought and their regard for general laws. Hence in the fourth and fifth centuries, there was a wholly new development of Greek medicine, then the foremost in the world. It was in better repute with the kings of Persia than even that of Egypt, notwithstanding the latter's long-established fame. The most illustrious physician of the period is Hippocrates, who stood so high above the others that his name, like that of Homer, finally denoted not so much a man as a form of literature. Hence his very person is not well known; and it is difficult, among the writings that go under his name, to distinguish those that can plausibly be attributed to his personal activity.

Hippocrates was born at Cos, and joined the Asclepiads of his native city. He was already famous at the time when Plato represents the action of his *Protagoras* as taking place,—apparently the opening years of the Peloponnesian War. He attained advanced age, and died, we are told, at Larissa. After him, his sons, his son-in-law Polybius, and his grandsons and great-grandsons continued to maintain at Cos the school which he had founded.

A passage from the *Phædrus* of Plato would seem to show that Hippocrates wrote treatises.<sup>1</sup> Among the seventy-two works of the collection, a few, perhaps, were his compositions. In the oldest ones are found his thought, if not his style. This is true of the *Ancient Medicine*; the *Airs, Waters, and Places*; the *Prognostics*; the *Regimen for Aques*; the *Epidemics* (Books I and III), and the *Aphorisms*.

The style is scarcely to be considered, as these works have no literary pretensions. The most interesting, however, from this

<sup>1</sup> *Phædrus*, p. 270 C.

point of view, is the treatise on *Ancient Medicine*, in which the author aims to expound the general and human side of medical science. We may be content with noting its archaic Ionian simplicity, which tends in no way to eloquence, yet does not exclude adroitness and discretion.

More important than the style is the matter. The writings show an interesting mixture of a spirit already scientific, with errors due to the newness of the science and the difficulty of complying with scientific laws without losing patronage. The author has very clearly and profoundly conceived that the laws of nature are constant, and alone active; that to explain extraordinary facts by a particular divine intervention is sheer waste of words;<sup>1</sup> that medicine arose from observation, at first instinctive, and later reflective and methodical; and that it cannot progress without observation, nor without distrusting arbitrary principles and hypotheses.<sup>2</sup> This is admirable; and Hippocrates, in fact, by the application of such a method made useful discoveries in the description of certain pathological facts. But in an adjoining passage he stumbles surprisingly: he does not wish use made of the terms dry and moist, but constantly employs sour and flat; and he often reasons on complex phenomena with a dauntless candor that does not suppose difficulties possible. These inevitable contradictions are characteristic of the time. But it is no less true that these old medical books are among those that do most honor to the Greece of the fifth century. If it is true that the history of literature can have no other interest than that of the history of thought, Hippocrates deserves mention by the side of his contemporaries whom we have treated, or are to treat, — Democritus, Socrates, and Thucydides.

<sup>1</sup> *Airs*, c. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Medicine*, cc. 1, 2, 14, etc.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SOPHISTRY AND RHETORIC. ANTIPHON; SOCRATES

1. Formation of Attic Prose.
2. Rhetoric in Sicily.
3. The Sophists.
4. The Leading Sophists: Protagoras.
5. Gorgias.
6. Minor Sophists.
7. Antiphon.
8. Socrates.<sup>1</sup>

**1. Formation of Attic Prose.**—Whatever may have been the merit of Ionic prose, it had not all the excellences of a great classic style. The *History* of Herodotus is a masterpiece, but its grace is childlike and incomplete. It has not the beauty and strength of manhood. Vigor of composition, precise analysis, power in pathos, and sober, inspiring eloquence are wanting. True Greek prose began to be produced in Athens between 430 and 410.

The qualities of pure, strong, analytic reason, which are essential to prose, appeared in Athens earlier than in the rest of Greece. We have already noticed traces of it in Solon, and have shown that Athens, situated, so to speak, midway between Doric and Ionic cultures, heiress of a long-existing civilization, had the privilege, from the beginning of its literary life, of appearing with full-fledged reason. But Athens at that time did not write prose. The elegy, then the drama, gave its reasoning powers their first occasions to display themselves. Athens took no interest in philosophy, nor had she any historians. Later on, her statesmen were eloquent, but did not at first write their orations. The oratory of Themistocles was transmitted only by tradition. Pericles, the elder contemporary of the first Attic prose writers, did not revise any of those speeches that excited the admiration of both partisans and opponents. The comic poets often remarked the force of his eloquence, that made the tribune resound as with the roar of thunder, and that, after the victory, left in the mind of its auditors the impression of a deep and penetrating thought. Thucydides paints admirably its political philosophy. Scattered expressions, preserved by Plutarch and others, show the poetic, picturesque grace and vigor sometimes adorn-

<sup>1</sup> BIBLIOGRAPHY: The fragments from the sophists are published in Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* II. There is a good edition of Antiphon by Blass, Leipzig, 1881, containing also the declamations attributed to Gorgias. Others by Mätzner, Berlin, 1838; and Van Herwerden, 1883. Cf. O. Navarre, *La Rhétorique avant Aristote*, Paris, 1900.



ing its thought. Speaking of the warriors who died in battle in the year 431, Pericles said, "The city has lost her youth, the year has lost its spring-time."<sup>1</sup> Again, in referring to those who died before Samos, he styled them "gods invisible, whose presence is known because of the honors they receive and the benefits they confer."<sup>2</sup> He was called the Olympian. Plato spoke of his reason as sublime and convincing.<sup>3</sup> It is probable that spoken eloquence reached its culminating point in Pericles. But he died without writing anything, according to Plutarch, except the decrees that he enacted.

Attic prose literature arose wholly out of the movement of ideas known in the middle of the fifth century as sophistry or rhetoric. Not till then did the orators begin to write their speeches. History, which was almost a form of oratory, arose at the same time; and philosophy, coming no less directly from sophistry and rhetoric, arose because of the opposition which these two arts provoked in certain minds. Thus Attic prose, in its three essential forms, had its origin in this curious intellectual revolution, which began outside of Athens, but attained there its importance, owing to the city's influence.

**2. Rhetoric in Sicily.**—The methodic study of oratory, the theory of the processes by which one may compose persuasive discourse, was begun in Sicily. Aristotle informs us of the occasion for the rise of rhetoric. After the expulsion of the tyrants in 465, numerous lawsuits were begun to recover the property which they had illegally confiscated.<sup>4</sup> The practice of judicial debate gave rise to a theory of pleading. Corax and then Tisias, wrote its rules in treatises (τέχναι) which Aristotle still read. Moreover, they kept a school of rhetoric, and were paid by their pupils for lessons whose practical value was well recognized.

What was the nature of this instruction? The aim of rhetoric, according to Corax and Tisias, is to effect persuasion. This results from plausibility (τὸ εἰκός). One need not, then, search for the truth, but only for the way to present a given idea so as to make it seem plausible to auditors.<sup>5</sup> To Plato, this distinction seemed immoral: yet it is not so in itself. The truest idea will not be accepted by the public unless the orator can make it plausible. In the interest of truth, an orator must study the art of persuasion. But to reach the result, Corax and Tisias did not make a full analysis of the different kinds of reasoning in discourse, as Aristotle did later. They proceeded in a manner more concrete and simple, and also more practi-

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Rhet.* I, 7, 34.

<sup>2</sup> Stesimbrotus in Plutarch, *Pericles*, 8, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Τὸ ὑψηλόνειν τοῦτο καὶ τελεσιουργόν (*Phædrus*, p. 270 A).

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle apud Cic., *Brutus*, 46.

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *Phædrus*, 267, 272, etc.

cally effective. Like modern teachers of rhetoric, they proceeded by applications and examples, making their pupils study a typical question from both its points of view, that of the accusation and that of the defence.<sup>1</sup> Caring little for art or style, they arranged the essential ideas of a plea in an order easy to comprehend. They distinguished exordium, discussion, and possibly narration. They had their disciples commit to memory model pleas and plans of argument; and hence, according to Aristotle, made rapid progress.

In a word, the nascent rhetoric was already very practical and clever, but neither philosophic nor artistic. Its influence would probably have been small, if it had not met, at this very moment, with nascent sophistry, which took possession of it and increased its power for action tenfold.

**3. Sophistry.** — The modern word "sophist" has come to mean a man who employs specious reasoning. In Greek σοφιστής already had this meaning in the fourth century, particularly in Aristotlé. But that is a derived sense. Properly the σοφιστής is he who makes a profession of σοφία, or science; and as the word science denoted things very different at different periods, it happens that Pindar, for example, calls those persons sophists who cultivate poetry. But in the middle of the fifth century, the title was usually applied to a group of men, prominent among whom were Gorgias and Protagoras, who professed to bring to Greece a new science, boldly assumed the appellation, still honorable, of sophists and offered to teach the science for money.

Their science, was, in fact, very new. First, it fairly repudiated all research into the nature of things and about the gods. Gorgias promulgated three propositions: 1. Absolute being does not exist. 2. If it did exist, it would be unknowable. 3. If it were knowable, the knowledge of it could not be communicated. Protagoras said that man is the measure of all things, and that the existence or non-existence of things has no reality apart from him; in other words, that the universe is only the collection of ideas which man makes of it. What was the object of true science? Practical life simply, things useful for man. There were sophists who discoursed about strategy, about a battle between hoplites, about war. Hippias professed to speak on all subjects and to know all professions. The highest use of science was naturally to give the individual "civic virtue," as Gorgias said; that is, the combination of qualities enabling a citizen to assume a leadership in civic affairs. Among such qualities, one of the chief was the power of speech. The art of speech, in its two principal forms of eristic and rhetoric, therefore, was one of the

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle. Σοφιστικοὶ ἔλεγχοι, c. 34.

essential aims of sophistic instruction. Eristic, born in the school of Elea, was the art of subtle discussion between professional debaters — or, in fact, of mental gymnastics. Rhetoric was the art of public speech which enabled an orator to win his case before a political body or a tribunal. Little difference whether the case were good or bad; in the teaching of Protagoras, no case was in itself good or bad, but was what one made it seem. The triumph of art, according to a maxim constantly repeated by the sophists, was precisely “to make the worse appear the better reason” (τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν); in other words, to give enough plausibility to a thesis which at first seems absurd to make it win the favor of an audience. The rhetoric of the sophists joined that of Sicily at this point, but with quite different philosophical and social principles.

At Athens, sophistry attained prodigious success; it turned even the hardest heads. This success is not difficult to understand. The disdain of the sophists for metaphysics could not have displeased the Athenian mind, which was little inclined to speculative research. The Athenian took less interest in nature than in the city, less in science than in politics and morals. Even the metaphysics of Plato is closely allied to morals. The Athenian was pre-eminently a “political animal.” At this time particularly, he turned his practical activity in every direction with indefatigable ardor; and sophistry gave him the very best means of rendering his activity more adroit and surer of success. The subtle, captious reasoning called eristic, far from disgusting him, amused him and appealed to him on his weak side. The prestige of rhetoric dazzled him, and the art seemed to be an instrument as well as an adornment. The whole generation of the time of the Peloponnesian War was subject to the spell of the new masters. There was not a youth with wealth and ambition who did not seek to gain possession of the mysterious force at their disposal — not a person fond of elegant language who did not admire their oratorical phrases.

Sophistry has been very diversely judged. In general it is condemned, as it was by Plato and Aristotle, in the name of true science and true morality. Yet it has its defenders, particularly among English scholars. They have pointed out the personal honesty of Gorgias and Protagoras, the noble moral discourses of Prodicus, the encyclopædic knowledge of Hippias, the elegant maxims of Alcidas, and the wise reserve of them all respecting insoluble questions. Whatever the part of truth in these apologies, one may say that sophistry was above all a school of theoretical and practical scepticism, and hence dangerous. Its grave error lay in its complete indifference to truth, its aversion to all patient, sincere research, its

great fondness for the jingle of words, its anxiety for persuasion rather than knowledge, its attachment to appearance — to the superficial, but immediate, effect. It lacked intellectual seriousness and probity. Herein it certainly wrought great evil to Greek character, which had no need for such instruction and profited by it later only too well.

One must, however, recognize also the merits of sophistry. If it accomplished nothing for science, it did much for the art of discourse. The oratory of Thucydides and Demosthenes derived from it much additional beauty. Even the exquisite perfection of Plato, though so different from it and so resolutely opposed to its principles, probably could not have been attained without its precedents. Athens really formed her rhetoric under the direction of the sophists. The art came forth mature, flexible, free from all difficulties of thought and style, capable of producing truly eloquent works in prose. Herodotus, as we have seen, was not strictly eloquent. The best orators did not write their speeches. Sophistry, making a methodic, passionate study of discourse, taught the orators the art of writing, as they sat in their chair, pen in hand, under the happy inspiration of the tribune, a language terse, concentrated, perfected in form, worthy of eternal existence. Owing to Gorgias and his rivals, in fact, the improvising orators were taught to write.

**4. The Leading Sophists: Protagoras.** — The first in date, at least with respect to the time of his instruction at Athens, if not the first in birth, is Protagoras. He was born at Abdera, probably about 485. After studying the philosophy of Heraclitus, he abandoned it and began, about thirty, to practise the profession of a sophist. Going from city to city to give lessons in eristic, he attracted auditors and disciples in multitude. The beginning of Plato's *Protagoras* gives a vivid picture of the enthusiasm and extraordinary respect he inspired among the youth. He made long visits to Athens, and knew Pericles, who loved, we are told, to discuss with him. He became very rich. About the age of seventy, a charge of impiety obliged him to leave Athens. He lost his life by shipwreck soon after.

The writings of Protagoras were numerous. The most important seem to have been a work entitled *Truth* (Ἀλήθεια), in which he set forth his metaphysical doubts; and a treatise on eristic, whose title is not definitely known. We have too few fragments of his work to be able to appreciate him correctly as a writer. He wrote in Ionic, and his style retained something of Ionic grace. He professed to be rather a dialectician than an orator. He was the first man to study grammatical questions and so founded Greek gram-



mar. Although he wished to be principally a master of eristic, he was very eloquent. The *Protagoras* of Plato clearly gives the idea of what a lesson by Protagoras might be: first an allegorical myth, then a logical discourse, and finally an explanatory commentary on some verses of Simonides; the whole ample, easy, pretty in appearance, possessed of loftiness and acumen, with nothing that would shock common sense—yet void of the philosophic precision demanded by Socrates.

5. **Gorgias.**—While Protagoras was chiefly a teacher of reasoning, Gorgias wished to be an orator and teacher of rhetoric. Born at Leontini in Sicily, about 485, he is said to have studied under Empedocles and Tisias. In 427 he was chosen by his countrymen to go on an embassy to Athens. It was his first visit to the city. He won extraordinary fame there, and died at nearly one hundred, having devoted all his life to his art. It made him prodigiously wealthy.

To him were attributed a philosophical work ironically called *On Nature, or the Non-Being* (Περὶ φύσεως ἣ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος); various essays on rhetoric; and some model orations (the *Pythian* and the *Olympian*, in which he exhorted the Greeks to peace; the *Funeral Oration for the Athenian Warriors*; and *Eulogies* of personages mythological or real—some serious, others mere paradoxes and witticisms of the class called *παίγνια*). There remain under his name, besides various fragments, two of these *παίγνια*, which the best critics incline to believe authentic. If to them are joined the admirable imitations of his style made by Plato, one may say that we know Gorgias fairly well; for, in any event, he is not very difficult to understand.

His characteristic is that he wished to be a virtuoso in discourse. He is not merely a dialectician, occupied with the skeleton of speech, but aims at beauty of language. He endeavors to charm the ear as much as to amuse the mind. He loves pomp and grandeur, and disdains judicial oratory as too simple. He prefers the political type, especially that called epideictic or model, which allowed him to display boldly all the magnificence and delicacy of his style. However, among many affectations and puerilities, he has some very just opinions. He had a feeling for certain of the beauties suited to prose, and exercised a manifest influence on even so great a writer as Thucydides. It will be well, accordingly, to study him somewhat closer.

His innovations concern the vocabulary and the sentence-structure. Though Ionic by birth, as Leontini was a colony of Naxos, he wrote in the Attic dialect. Thereby he rendered homage to the growing influence of Atticism and showed a just presentiment of the future. But the Attic he used was not the simple spoken language. It was

a composite product, judiciously made up, on the one hand, of poetic and sonorous old words that gave nobility to the style, and on the other, of new words created by the author, or renewed through some unusual employment, designed to express finer shades of meaning than those of ordinary parlance. He loved abstract words, substantives derived from verbs, and adjectives and participles used substantively. In the construction of his sentences, he set to work in the same spirit. Pomp, beauty, nobility on the one hand, and on the other, vigor and precision, were his aims. He could not yet build an ample, flexible period, capable of giving his language grandeur and weight (*gravitas*). But he saw that oratory needs both force and grace, and so he sought a form of expression that had both strength and precision. He discovered antithesis (ἡ ἀντικειμένη λέξις), the form so well adapted to Greek genius, which always loved to express its most precise opinions by opposing them (μέν, δέ); what had till then been mere instinct was transformed into a process. Besides, Gorgias emphasized and underlined his oppositions by initial or final assonances (ὁμοιοκάταρκτα, ὁμοιοτέλευτα), by equality in the number of syllables (πάρισα), by analogous verbal formations.

★ The great defect of his writing is the emptiness of his thought. He very properly directed Attic prose into the path of nobility, precision, and oratorical harmony; but he could not follow along the path, because he had only the appearance of the force necessary—had nothing serious to say. His sentences, though full in words, are wanting in ideas; his abundance is sterile; his constructions have too many false windows. His luxuriance is cold and heavy, as he has only processes without inspiration. His magnificence is stiff and monotonous, and quickly fatigues. On the whole, his merit is in having been for Thucydides almost what Isocrates was for Demosthenes, or Balzac for Bossuet. He rendered the instrument flexible and put it into the hands of the great artist. The rôle, though secondary, is important.

**6. Lesser Sophists.**— Besides Gorgias and Protagoras, still other sophists, though inferior, had considerable influence.

Prodicus of Ceos was fifteen or twenty years younger than Protagoras. He wrote on various subjects, but was celebrated chiefly as a professor of morals and style. He taught for many years at Athens and grew rich there. His morals were traditional, though ingeniously relieved by fine observation and happy fancy. Xenophon, who may have been his pupil, draws his inspiration from him, in narrating the myth of Heracles choosing between Vice and Virtue.<sup>1</sup> Socrates, without appreciating him as a man of learning, rec-

<sup>1</sup> *Mem.* II, 1, 21 ff.

ognized his merit in practical morals and willingly sent him such of his disciples as he found lacking in true philosophic spirit. His studies on language seem to have been very interesting. He gave extreme attention to the precision of words (*ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων*), or the distinction of synonymes and the analysis of the precise meaning of terms. Plato constantly represents him as engaged in such researches, and is much amused thereby. The idea he gives us of Prodicus is that of a punctilious pedant, limiting himself to the distinguishing of words and never going farther.<sup>1</sup> The portrait is sportive; yet in this effort for precision not by any means all was bad. Thucydides, Xenophon, and Isocrates often imitated the distinctions of Prodicus, who certainly taught his successors to use, in their choice of terms, a more just and delicate precision. And this, in all truly classic prose, is fundamental.

Hippias of Elis, who occupies a rather important place in Plato's dialogues, seems to have been somewhat finical, owing to his encyclopædic pretensions. He spoke on all subjects—the heavens, geometry, syllables, rhythms, Homeric genealogies, morals—in a redundant, florid style, much richer in words than in ideas. With all this, he knew how to make his own clothes and foot-wear!

Let us mention still another rather eccentric sophist, *Stesimbrotus* of Thasos, who, for money, gave lessons in morals, while explaining Homer. He was slightly different from the others, estranged from rhetoric, an enemy of contemporary institutions, of the manners of the time, and of democracy, an adversary of Pericles and an admirer of Cimon. He wrote on *Themistocles*, *Thucydides*,<sup>2</sup> and *Pericles*, a treatise whose statements Plutarch often found of use.

**7. Antiphon.**—The sophists advanced considerably the theory of eloquence and style. But aside from their models they left no specimens of discourse. The honor of beginning the list of Ten Orators in the Alexandrian Canon was reserved for an Athenian of the old type, an orator and rhetorician, contemporary with Gorgias and Protagoras, though somewhat younger. This was Antiphon of Rhamnus, the teacher and immediate predecessor of Thucydides.<sup>3</sup>

Antiphon, the son of Sophilus, was born in the Attic deme of Rhamnus in 480. Though his life is almost wholly unknown, it was probably devoted exclusively to his art. The end of his life is well known from Thucydides: having taken an important part in the aristocratic conspiracy of the Four Hundred, he was embroiled in

<sup>1</sup> See especially *Protagoras*, p. 337 A–C.

<sup>2</sup> He treats him as a statesman, not as a historian.

<sup>3</sup> Consult: Cucuel, *Essai sur le langage et le style de l'orateur Antiphon*, Paris, 1886.

their ruin. Thucydides represents him as the real head of the conspiracy. After the reestablishment of the democracy, he was accused of treason and condemned to death (411). In connection with this account, Thucydides has given a celebrated picture of Antiphon, which, in the vivacity of its admiration, breaks from the ordinary reserve of the historian.<sup>1</sup> "Antiphon," he says, "was not inferior in uprightness to any Athenian of his time, and he was superior in the power to conceive and express his thoughts. He did not speak in the assembly nor, except when necessary, before the tribunal, because the fame of his eloquence put the multitude in opposition to him. But those who had cases to defend before the people or before judges, found in him a most excellent counsellor. His oration in his own defence, when prosecuted for his part in the Revolution, is certainly the most eloquent plea that has ever been pronounced."

Antiquity read numerous works of different kinds attributed to Antiphon — works of oratorical instruction, speeches, and writings of an epideictic and sophistic nature<sup>2</sup>. These last, however, have generally been ascribed, since Didymus, to another Antiphon than the orator.

Among the writings of the first group, we no longer have the *Treatise on Rhetoric* (Τεχνή ῥητορικῇ), which, however, is sometimes considered apocryphal; nor the collection of *Exordiums and Perorations* (Προοίμια καὶ ἐπίλογοι), one of the oldest examples of a type of collections, wonderfully meeting the needs of practical instruction, and abundantly multiplied later. The pleas of the Attic orators show that the exordiums and perorations were early fixed in their essential elements, and that exordiums were sometimes transferred almost literally from one speech to another. We have a very curious work entitled *Tetralogies*. There are three groups of four orations each: accusation, defence, reply of the accusation, reply of the defence. Critics contest the authenticity of the *Tetralogies*, but without any decisive reason. Others deny that they have any merit worth consideration. But this is a grave error. The *Tetralogies* are not true discourses, and cannot be expected to have the merit of those really delivered before judges. They are scholastic exercises or schemes of discourse. Remembering this, one must recognize that the art in them is really remarkable. The absence of concrete matter no doubt makes them seem like a fantastic jest, which one is tempted to call frivolous. But these subtle, penetrating models are designed to show how, from a given situation, one can obtain arguments favoring a specific thesis. Their subtlety of thought is pushed to its limit, yet without becoming pure mental jargon. The

<sup>1</sup> Thucydides, VIII. 68.



argumentation, however fine-spun, could be used almost without change for a real plea. Let us take an example. A man has been killed; by whom? He has not been pillaged; his slave, who died later, accused one of the deceased man's enemies. Both circumstantial and real evidence conspire against the accused. Antiphon makes use of these two elements of proof in turn and then refutes them. Without analyzing the four speeches, it will suffice, for comprehending his method, to consider by itself a single idea that one can trace from discourse to discourse: 1. (the Prosecution) it was not robbers who committed the deed, for the victim was not pillaged; 2. (the Defence) perhaps the robbers were interrupted; 3. (the Prosecution) if they had been interrupted, the survivors would testify to the fact; 4. (the Defence) the survivors have been terrified and hence have remained quiet. There is no real plea which does not contain reasoning of this sort; and Antiphon's work was not frivolous when he habituated his disciples to formulating something akin to it in whatever case they had to plead. Other arguments, somewhat psychological in character, are equally interesting. The orator knew human nature in general; he knew also his contemporaries, knew that a judge is always inclined to dread the responsibility of an irrevocable sentence, and that an Athenian judge ordinarily felt well inclined toward men of simple piety, who were friendly to the people. From this he obtained excellent material for his plea. The style, though somewhat dry, is already Attic in precision and vigor. Like Gorgias, the author distinguishes synonymes; like all the sophists and like Thucydides, he opposes appearance to reality, and probability to fact. He is fond of taking adjectives and neuter participles substantively. He has groups of bold, expressive words. His style has the antithetic stiffness found in Gorgias, though there is more seriousness underneath. If the *Tetralogies* were not the work of Antiphon, it is difficult to say to what author and time they should be attributed.

Of his real pleas, only three remain, all relating to murder trials. They show the art of the *Tetralogies*, enriched and rendered flexible by contact with reality. The most important and celebrated is that *On the Murder of Herodes*. A citizen of Mitylene travelled with Herodes, who disappeared at Methymna. The Mitylenean is accused of having slain his travelling companion, and defends himself against the accusation. In the exordium he represents himself as a simple man, inexperienced in speech. This, unfortunately, is said in rather polished language; but he has confidence in his judges, and invokes the sanctity of the law. In narration, the story is short and clear, interrupted by testimony and deductions. The discussion

is first that of facts, then that of motives. These are examined for both sides from the point of view of probability, following the rule of the *Tetralogies* and of the old rhetoric. The discourse closes with the development of three general ideas, or commonplaces (τόποι), which are well chosen: first the possibility of judicial errors; then the political antecedents of the accused's father; and finally the visible protection of the gods, who have not ceased to testify in favor of his innocence. The peroration is a *résumé* of the principal arguments, with a passage on the consequences of the decision. Antiphon used this passage again in the exordium of another oration. All his pleas are the compositions of a *logographer*; <sup>1</sup> that is to say, the advocate, according to Athenian usage, did not appear before the tribunal, but composed for his client a discourse which the latter recited or read as his own personal work. The art of the logographer is not exactly that of a modern lawyer; it demands more simplicity, and a peculiar cleverness in lending to a character the language of his condition. We shall consider this matter again in treating of Lysias, who excelled in such vivid, peculiar compositions. In Antiphon, the power of concealing oneself behind a client, and giving him his true bearing, had not reached so high a degree of perfection. The orator concealed his voice in vain; it was really he who was heard speaking. But his voice was pleasing to listen to, for it discussed forcibly and clearly.

We have said that a third group of writings bearing his name was attributed even in antiquity to another man, "Antiphon the Sophist," supposed to be a contemporary. Really nothing is less well attested. The most important of the writings were a treatise, *On Truth* (Περὶ ἀληθείας), and two moral discourses, *On Concord* (Περὶ ὁμονοίας) and *On Politics* (Πολιτικός). The fragments we have, though short, are interesting. Other somewhat longer fragments preserved by Stobæus, without the name of the author, appear to have come from the Περὶ ὁμονοίας. There certainly were several Antiphons in the fifth century. Which is the author of these fragments? Without entering here into the controversy, we may say that the resemblance between the character of these passages and that of the oratorical works is great enough so that the differences, being easily explained by differences of type, do not absolutely compel us to deny the authorship of the orator. They are not unworthy of him. If they really are his, it is interesting to note that this firm, lofty spirit, so much admired by Thucydides, gave his attention also to the problems which occupied Gorgias and Protagoras.

<sup>1</sup> [There are two classes of logographers; cf. chap. IX, 7 of this work with chap. XX, 4. Antiphon belongs, of course, to the latter. — Tr.]

Cicero, speaking of the Greek orators of this period, says that they had "grandeur in their language, much thought, terse brevity, and sometimes, with it all, a slight obscurity."<sup>1</sup> The criticism well sums up the impression one gets of the oldest of the Attic orators who wrote his works.

**8. Socrates.** — The account of this period would be incomplete if one did not put beside the sophists the figure of Socrates, their adversary, who came into relation with them at so many points, even by his opposition, though also by certain resemblances. His influence is one of the most far-reaching in history. Not only Greece, but mankind as a whole, has felt and still feels it. He founded a philosophic religion. The Fathers regarded him as a precursor of Christianity. J. J. Rousseau, in a celebrated passage, compares and opposes him to Jesus. Even in our day, his name and thought are constantly met in the meditations of thinkers. He left no writings; but through his disciples he is the source of an immense literature, all of which bears his impress. It is, then, legitimate and necessary to give him a place in literary history, since without him that history would have been quite different. We need not, however, examine minutely his doctrine, but simply characterize his system and his influence.<sup>2</sup>

Socrates, son of the sculptor Sophroniscus and the midwife Phænarete, was born at Athens in 470 or 469. The condition of his parents was modest, yet not humble. He began, like his father, by being a sculptor; and even won some reputation, if it is true that a group of draped figures which Pausanias saw as he entered the Acropolis was really the philosopher's work. While busy with sculpture, he heard men speak of the researches of philosophy. Anaxagoras and Zeno were the fashion of the age; and Protagoras, Gorgias, and Prodicus were beginning to attain celebrity. The youth was confronted by this movement of thought, and devoted himself henceforth entirely to philosophy. Aside from his philosophic mission, the external circumstances of his life that deserve mention are not numerous. As a hoplite, he fought at the siege of Potidæa (432-429), and at the battle of Delium (414). His bravery and fortitude won general admiration. At Potidæa he saved the life of the wounded Alcibiades.<sup>3</sup> In spite of his wish to remain out of

<sup>1</sup> Cic., *Brutus*, 7: "Grandes erant verbis, crebris sententiis, compressione rerum breves et ob eam ipsam causam interdum subobscuri."

<sup>2</sup> Consult: A. Fouillée, *Philosophie de Socrate*, Paris, 1874; Boutroux, *Socrate, fondateur de la science morale* (*Mémoire* of 1885, incorporated by the author in his *Études d'histoire de la philosophie*, Paris, 1897).

<sup>3</sup> Plato, *Symposium*, p. 219 E. *et seq.* A later tradition represents him as rescuing Xenophon at Delium; but really Xenophon cannot have been present at this battle.

political life, he was called upon to preside, in 406, over the assembly which tried the generals of Arginusæ. Popular passions demanded that they should be tried in a body, despite the law. Socrates would not put the proposition to vote, and all but fell a victim of his resistance.<sup>1</sup> Under the tyranny of the Thirty, when summoned, with three other persons, to proceed in an illegal arrest, he alone dared to refuse, and certainly would have paid for his courage with his life, if the Thirty had not been almost immediately overthrown. In 399, after the reëstablishment of the democracy, Meletus, Anytus, and Lycon accused him of introducing new divinities and of corrupting the youth. A violent religious reaction in popular opinion was effected: the aristocrats, the philosophers, and the enemies of religion were enveloped in the same hatred. Already associated by comedy with the representatives of scepticism and atheism, he fell a victim to the error and made no effort to dissipate it. Judging probably that he could not continue his work amid a hostile environment, and thinking, perhaps, that he had lived long enough, he scorned to defend himself seriously. He was condemned to death and put in prison to await the return of the sacred trireme which had just left for Delos. He might have escaped, but would not consent to try. At the end of thirty days, the trireme returned; the sacred period, during which no execution could take place, was ended. That evening, in the midst of his disciples, he drank the cup of hemlock with a serenity that makes his very death, the final act of his mission, the most persuasive and splendid of all. The story as told in the *Phædo* is one of the most touching, most simply sublime, pages to be found in any literature.<sup>2</sup>

Socrates was at one with the sophists in condemning the researches of the natural philosophers. He considered that they were attacking problems beyond the power of the human intellect to solve; and that their efforts, even if they could be successful, would have no utility. His point of departure in philosophy was, therefore, exactly the same as that of Protagoras and Gorgias.

But the common ground of these philosophers here comes to an end. For Protagoras and Gorgias, sharing his opinions thus far, devote themselves, without further precaution, to the search for

<sup>1</sup> Xen. *Mem.* I, 1, 18, and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> Socrates was married. His wife, Xanthippe, became in antiquity the type of the hot-tempered scold. A fine passage of the *Memorabilia* (II, 2) indicates that Socrates was able to see, beneath the superficial ill humor of his wife, the genuine merit which counterbalanced it. His eldest son, Lamprocles, was already grown at the time of the trial; and there were two brothers much younger. The stories according to which Socrates married a second time are without foundation.



the useful, and think they have gloriously attained it by the formulation of a fallacious rhetoric. But Socrates has quite a different opinion. He believes that one cannot actually know what is useful without a knowledge of real things; and that, to arrive at such knowledge, one must employ a sagacious method, of which the sophists and rhetors have not the slightest suspicion. The first thing necessary for philosophy is to have a sure method; the facts of science will follow.

Such a notion of the necessity of method is, at this date, as new as it is important. There is no science without method; but the old philosophers ignored the fact. The method of Socrates is called dialectic. It is the art of employing conversation, or rather questions and answers, in the analysis of ideas. The connected discourse of the rhetoricians admits of many obscurities and confusions that pass unperceived in the movement of the language. Dialectic aims to note and bring these to light. At each step the two interlocutors make sure that they understand each other exactly, that there is nothing equivocal nor contradictory in what has been said, and that they agree both with each other and with their earlier assertions. (Contradiction is a sign of error;) true ideas can be brought together without causing it. By the aid of dialectic, Socrates refutes the sophists; he examines their assertions and analyzes them, discloses their inner contradictions, and irreparably destroys their force. The auditors and even the interlocutor assent. But dialectic is not limited to destroying and refuting; it must replace the false with the true ideas, and substitute science for error. This is accomplished with the same success. Socrates believes that truth is at the basis of our intelligence, though obscured and enveloped in veils that conceal it. It is necessary, then, to manipulate the mind (*maieutic*) and bring to light the truth it conceals. Dialectic examines similars, to compare them with each other, to determine their general character, and to define and classify them. By induction and definition, it forms science proper.

The science of Socrates is chiefly that of morals; for in his eyes this is the most interesting, most useful, subject possible. Yet he does not exclude the practical arts. He chats by preference with artisans, artists, and soldiers about the matters of their professions. But he believes that in all domains of research there is an unknowable part which the human intellect cannot attain. The gods reserve for themselves the supreme secrets, communicating them, when they choose, to their friends. Socrates thus received the inspiration of the divinity. Men often speak of the "demon" of Socrates; the expression is an unhappy one. Socrates never be-

lieved that a particular entity inspired him, but that the divinity gave him knowledge as it would many another.

Among the moral questions he examined, one of the most important is that of the nature of virtue, and of the relation between the good and the useful. He showed that in all things the useful, the good, and the beautiful are inseparable. In the moral world, virtue alone is truly advantageous. Hence it is foolish to do wrong. Virtue is the result of intelligent knowledge.

Notwithstanding his aversion to questions relating to the nature of the universe, he is obliged, even by moral considerations, to touch upon the relations between man and the divinity, and consequently to deal with metaphysics. He remains faithful here to his general method. He considers the spectacle of the universe and, comparing facts, he reaches by induction the idea of final causes, and so of a Providence. Dialectic brought him to a sort of philosophic religion. He brought with him the spirit of veritable piety. He speaks at pleasure of the gods and of God. He sacrifices to the divinities of the city; but in his thought, all the divine appellations go back to one unique Intelligence, a really living Being, active and paternal in a very different sense from the abstract Being of the Eleatics or the divine Spirit of Anaxagoras. And as for the lot of man after death, Socrates probably believed in a future life, though not attempting to use dialectic in any demonstration of its existence.

Religion, morals, method, so closely connected together, were not for Socrates mere objects of curious speculation. It was the great affair of human life to reach the truth concerning these matters. Hence his philosophy and his work had a novel character. He did not confine his teaching to a limited circle of initiated disciples, like the first philosophers, but became a true apostle. He thinks himself sent on a divine mission. He feels that he renders his countrymen a service in pursuing them incessantly with urgent questions, in forcing them to examine themselves and not to slumber in the quietude of ready-made opinions. In order better to fulfil his mission, he renounced political life. For his mission he died, convinced that he would fail in his essential function if he ceased to pursue error relentlessly and prepare men's minds for the truth.

His influence over philosophy can scarcely be overestimated, since all philosophical or even intellectual religion owes to him its origin. His influence in literature, too, was considerable. Though he wrote nothing, his marvellous conversation could not fail to influence the imagination of writers. Alcibiades recounts, in Plato's *Symposium*, what emotions these discourses excited in the minds of those who heard them. They could never be forgotten. Like the

old melodies of Olympus, they threw men's spirits into an intoxication. Yet they were ordinarily very simple; this man, who generally talked about fullers and shoemakers, had no tendency to employ pompous words. Long discourse disgusted him; he lost himself in it, he said. He loved an easy, natural style, and had no fear of using a trivial word. With Gorgias and his school, Attic prose was on the point of losing in flexibility and naturalness what it had gained in force and splendor: Socrates at once brought it back to simplicity. But the simplicity was combined with two excellent qualities, poetic feeling and irony. His poesy, indeed, was not quite like that found in the *Symposium* or the *Timæus* of Plato; but it came from a very lofty moral sentiment, the idea of divine grandeur, the mystery of that unknown region which surrounds and circumscribes human knowledge. His irony had the grace of the finest comedy: it made fools seem more ridiculous; and the moral wretchedness of folly, false knowledge, or duped honesty, was manifested to all by the smile of derision on his lips. If one adds to this his habit of clearness in composition and precision in thought, of which his dialectic is a good example, and also the vivid image of his person which he bequeathed to posterity, one will understand how it is that, even though he wrote not a word, he merits a place of honor in the history of literature.

With Socrates and the sophists, we have the beginning of the whole literary movement of the fourth century. We have seen the stream at its source; we can now follow its course along three principal branches — history, philosophy, and oratory.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THUCYDIDES AND HIS SUCCESSORS

1. Thucydides: Life and Career.
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OF all the forms of Attic prose, history was the first to reach perfection. In Thucydides it produced immediately a masterpiece of the highest order. This is explained in part by the fact that Ionia had just produced Herodotus. But the historical type deteriorated, too, at once; none of the successors of Thucydides can be compared with him. Moreover, for the most part, time has greatly diminished their fame; so that, aside from Thucydides, history offers in this period material for only a rapid sketch.

**1. Thucydides: Life and Career.** — Thucydides, son of Olorus, was born in the Attic deme of Halimon about 460.<sup>1</sup> His family was related to that of Miltiades and Cinon. Miltiades had married the daughter of a king of Thrace named Olorus. It is evidently for this reason that the father of Thucydides bore that name, and that Thucydides himself possessed in Thrace, at Scapte Hyle, rich gold mines, which gave him, according to his own account, great influence in that country. It is said that, while young, he heard Herodotus read at Athens part of his history; and that, because he wept for admiration, Herodotus congratulated his father on having a son so fond of learning. The anecdote is pleasant rather than well authenticated. A better tradition makes him the disciple of Antiphon; it is ren-

<sup>1</sup> He must have been thirty years of age at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, for he tells us that he foresaw all its importance; and, on the other hand, had he been older, he probably would not have been so strongly influenced by sophistry. In Aulus Gellius (*Noctes Atticæ*, XV, 23) Pamphila represents him as forty in 431; but this is probably a mere approximation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Principal editions; Poppo, revised and abridged by Stahl, Leipsic, 1883; Classen, frequently revised and corrected; Stahl, critical edition, Leipsic, 1873–1874; Böhme, Leipsic, 2d ed., 1864–1876; Hude, Leipsic, 1898, the first four books; A. Croiset, Paris, 1886, the first two books; Bekker, Oxford, 4 vols., 1821; Krüger, Berlin, 1860; Haas, Paris, 1884, with Latin translation and scholia; Thomas Arnold, London, 3 vols., 1882, with English notes and maps.

English translation by B. Jowett, Oxford, 1881; French translations by Betant and by Zevort.

Consult: J. Girard, *Essai sur Thucydide*, Paris, 2d ed., 1884.



dered plausible by the manner in which he mentions Antiphon in his history. Disciple or not, he certainly felt the influence of Antiphon, and also that of contemporary sophists. Thucydides is, in the highest degree, a man of his time, a representative of the generation which arrived at manhood with the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. He was chosen strategus in 424, a fact which seems to indicate that he had already won distinction in several campaigns. Nothing is known of his political life. His moderate opinions and penetrating mind lead us to believe that, in the contests of the agora, he preferred, so far as it was possible, the part of spectator to that of actor. As strategus he was given command of a squadron that was to guard the Thracian coast in the region of Amphipolis, while that city was occupied by his colleague Eucles. A bold attack of the Spartan Brasidas in midwinter surprised Eucles, who sent for Thucydides. But it was too late; the city fell into the hands of Brasidas before help came. Thucydides was accused of treason and condemned. He was exiled for twenty years. This long period was occupied by the preparation of his history, and probably by numerous travels for information's sake. In 404, after the capture of Athens by Lysander, the exiled Athenians were recalled. It is not certain that Thucydides was included in the general measure, but he certainly was authorized at the same time to return. He lived for some years afterward, for he speaks of his return in the fifth book of his history. But his death occurred doubtless before 395. According to a tradition, whose details vary, he died a violent death while on a visit to Scape Hyle.

His history was then unfinished. He tells us that he proposed to give an account of the twenty-seven years of the Peloponnesian War—from 431 to 404; but his account ceases with 411, the twentieth year. The history of the twenty years is divided in our manuscripts into eight books, but the division was not made by the author. Certain modern scholars have tried to show that the work was begun at the beginning of the war, and did not have, in the author's mind, the unity it has to-day. This is possible; yet the important thing is that the unity exists, and was clearly intended by Thucydides, who implies it in several passages.

**2. Science in Thucydides.**—What gives exceptional value to the history of Thucydides is the fact that he is deeply imbued with a scientific spirit, always rare, and at that time wholly new. Such a spirit is evident in the general habits of his thought, and in the particular application he makes of it as a historian.

First of all, he is a philosopher, a man who believes, like Anaxagoras and Hippocrates, that the events of nature are brought to pass

in accordance with regular laws, and that the popular religious conceptions are too simple. Certain ancient critics, as we learn from one of his biographers, even accused him of atheism. He is no more atheistic than Anaxagoras or Hippocrates, who recognize a Spirit governing the universe, and certain divine forces. But he may have seemed so in the eyes of his contemporaries, who believed in jealous, capricious, passionate gods, and consulted oracles and omens. Beyond doubt Thucydides has no faith in oracles. He expressly blames Nicias for superstition. He leaves no place in his history for that marvellous element of which Herodotus was so fond. If he speaks of fortune (τύχη), nowhere has he made it a divinity. It signifies for him only the unforeseen and unknowable. In politics, as in nature, he believes in intelligible causes, purely human, which need to be discovered. Some of them lie in the will of individuals and in part elude all foresight; yet in part only, for each individual has a character that, on the whole, remains the same and governs his acts. Thucydides carefully studied the psychology of individuals. He devoted himself also to the racial character of peoples, which is no less precise, and more far-reaching in the scope of its action. He believed that Spartans and Athenians obeyed unconsciously their hereditary tendencies and rarely offered them any resistance. Apart from such moral causes, he finds that material causes determine events; for example, the geographical situation of a country, or its military or financial resources. The great merit of a statesman is intelligence, which analyzes all these causes, measures their respective potency, and enables him to act in view of the end he proposes to attain. On the other hand, morals proper, which for Herodotus were the supreme law of history, seem to him to have little place in the play of human affairs, at least in so far as the immediate consequences of an action are concerned. He often speaks in noble terms of virtue, and describes accurately and without declamation the dangers which the moral corruption due to the war threatens to bring upon Greece.<sup>1</sup> But he does not believe that history is always a moral lesson. He thinks, with his age, that selfish interests are what govern the world, and that, justly or unjustly, its people often succeed in defiance of morality. In his aversion to all that might seem a concession to current popular morals, he goes so far as to use only the language of selfish interest, even where this is at one with good morals and could be aided by them.

With no faith in the marvellous, he is no less averse to the extraordinary. He aims to be useful, rather than to astonish. His tendency is a positive, practical one. He censures the logographers

<sup>1</sup> Thucydides, III. 81-83.

and poets for wishing to embellish reality. As an Athenian of sound reason and stolid sense, he prefers nothing above truth. He wishes his work to be of lasting profit (*κτῆμα ἐς αἰεί*), rather than a pompous composition, whose success is momentary only (*ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα*).<sup>1</sup> If he extols at first the grandeur of the events he is about to recount, this is partly from compliance with tradition, but also because the positive lesson to be gained will be better emphasized. In general he leaves entirely aside laudatory and eulogistic language.

He is well informed, moreover, in politics and war, the things that form the material of history. Having had part in both, he knows them more directly than through books. When he describes a campaign, one sees in the precision of the narrative a man of the profession. If he pictures a great political discussion, one feels that he knows the actors, their ideas, and those of their party.

He is remarkably impartial. Some have, at times, denied this, because of two or three severe criticisms directed against Cleon. But one needs first to prove that Cleon did not merit them. Such a proof is much more difficult, because the account is of restrained severity. In fact, to read twenty pages of Thucydides is sufficient to convince one that the only passion animating him is that for truth. He loves, in every problem, to examine scientifically the motives which could lead men to prefer one or the other course of action; this is his delight, the demand of his nature — as that of others is to plead a cause. Never does success dazzle him; never is a reverse, in his eyes, *a priori*, a cause for censure. The men and peoples he prefers are those who obey reason, but he does not aim to give any one either praise or blame. He fears being duped above all, though it should be by his own preferences. His constant care is to understand, even more than to judge; and if he judges, he puts the argument for both sides before us. The character of individuals and peoples is never so vividly portrayed by him as when he brings to light, with calm equality, their merits and defects before giving his final judgment. Though an aristocrat by birth, he admires the Athenian democracy, notwithstanding that it banished him. When he speaks of his exile, he seems to be speaking of the exile of another. He shows respect for Nicias, but this does not prevent him from seeing and setting forth his faults. Such is his spirit everywhere.

All these are the qualities of a superior man, who could, if he chose, be something else than a historian. One finds his manner in other things characteristic of the same penetrating, positive reason with which he essays the profession of his choice.

<sup>1</sup> I, 22, 4.

For example, in selecting his subject, he relates the military and political history of his age, and speaks of the remote past only by accident. In fact, present reality alone is really instructive and substantial in the eyes of this enemy of marvel, this politician, this Athenian of positive tendencies. It needs to be studied methodically; and the study of it is the task to which he devotes himself.

A historian's first duty is to scrutinize all the documents which he consults. Thucydides understood the fact perfectly and has told us of the difficulties he encountered. In the study of ancient events, distance, the mazes of memory, the liking for the marvellous, are perpetual sources of error. In contemporary events, error comes from the prejudice of witnesses, contradictory reports of selfish motives, and even the difficulties of learning facts at first hand. Most men, says he, accept without scruple the first account that comes, and do not give themselves the trouble to verify it.<sup>1</sup> He proceeds very differently. In ancient events, he criticises the accounts of the poets with absolute freedom. His criticism of Homer in the beginning of his work is a remarkable essay, and that in a form of study which presents peculiar difficulties. When he treats contemporary events, he aims, first of all, to witness the facts himself. If this is impossible, he devotes himself to a discussion of contradictory statements; he questions both parties. As a historian, he is neither Athenian nor Spartan. He is and means to be only a historian.<sup>2</sup> Geography, the background, as it were, of history, seems to him highly important. He gives it all the precision that a keen mind could give in an epoch when an author had to study such matters almost wholly by himself, without the aid of instruments or of perfectly exact statements of others to guide him. He is equally careful in chronology. He blames Hellanicus for neglecting it, and is careful about it even to scrupulousness. To avoid the errors arising from diversity of calendars in Greece, he adopts a system founded upon natural phenomena. He proceeds by years and seasons, attempting to divide the seasons into shorter periods, according to the stage in the growth of wheat, for example, or the nature of the work performed in the fields. The system evidently lacks the precision which we attain to-day, but it was then a marked advance.

Truth once discovered needs expression. Here again the choice of methods raises delicate problems. There is always an element of approximation in the artistic expression of reality; it must distort the account as little as possible. In default of literal exactness, its essence must be portrayed by means of a higher truth. From the scientific point of view, only one thing can be said of the narratives

<sup>1</sup> I, 20.

<sup>2</sup> I, 22, 2; V, 26, 5.



of Thucydides, namely, that they reveal their conformity with facts by their very clearness. His statements do not, indeed, seem clear in every case; but in such cases the facts escape us, and this obscures the connection of the whole. Thucydides excelled in reconstructing the necessary logic of causes and effects. It has been said that few portions of the history of the world are better understood than the Sicilian expedition. Side by side with narratives proper, he often gives pictures of entire periods, grouping and summarizing with a few strokes the dominant characteristics of a situation, a period, or a class of men. Here synthesis and its short summaries are indispensable. No one else has rendered it more vigorous or expressive. Even in his extremest brevity, the penetrating light of intelligence, which dissipates the darkness and opens the recesses, gives a sensation of living reality — reality comprehended and expressed in its essence, its soul, if one may say so, and boldly restored to its true basis. All these methods are still employed by historical science so fully that they cause us no surprise.

But Thucydides is quite unique in his treatment of the "speeches." The modern historian knows the importance of quoting the very words spoken by historic characters. Out of respect, if he cannot transcribe them, he does not recast them. Thucydides did otherwise. Like his predecessors, he made his personages speak in direct discourse, even when he could not quote their words. But he gave not only conversations and short allocutions, as they did, but great oratorical discourses, true *δημηγορίαι*, like those pronounced at Athens in the assembly. In such cases he did not limit himself to literal reproductions. Often, it is true, the attempt would have been unsuccessful; but even when he has at hand the official text of a letter addressed by Nicias to the people, he recasts it without scruple, to suit himself. In other cases, it is evident that he aims less to give a minutely exact idea of the progress of the debates, or edit a report of them, than to show their spirit and general intent. He simplifies and concentrates. He sees the two conflicting theses, and presents them to the reader in succession in two model discourses opposed to one another, like two adversaries pleading in the *Tetralogies* of Antiphon. Two or three times he even presents these conflicts of opinion in the form of dramatic dialogue.<sup>1</sup> The discourses are ordinarily put into the mouth of the statesman who, at the moment, best personifies the ideas of his party. But often also, in default of a man who could play the part of protagonist, he leaves the discourse anonymous. He sets forth clearly what his method is,

<sup>1</sup> II. 71-74 (between Archidamos and the Plataeans); and especially V, 85-111 (between the Athenians and the Melians).

"I have made each orator say, in each circumstance, what seemed to me most appropriate (τὰ δέοντα μάλιστα), keeping as close as possible to the spirit that, in general, inspired his discourses."<sup>1</sup> To discourses thus conceived he gives a considerable place in his history. This is owing, in the first place, to the great importance of discourse in the political life of the time, but also to the influence of rhetoric and the example of Antiphon. We hesitate to-day to accept such a method of historical exposition. We regard a statesman's words as worthy of the same respect that documents command. If we cannot reproduce them literally, we do not wish distortion of form to make the reader suppose that our exposition has more of truth to reality than it has. The scruple is due to the progress of the scientific spirit. Thucydides did not feel the scruple because, notwithstanding his genius, he belonged to his own time. Once having determined what is artificial in his method, we must confess that, even from the scientific point of view, he turns it to advantage admirably. Each of his discourses is a mould into which he pours all the philosophy of a situation, all the thought of a statesman or party. All his eloquence is full of thought. We can understand why Demosthenes nourished his mind upon it. Even from the point of view of modern science, all its elements are worth preserving. In order fully to satisfy our taste for truth, it is sufficient to take away the marks of quotation, so to speak, and assign to their proper chapters, under the name of the historian himself, these profound reflections and logical demonstrations.

**3. Art in Thucydides.** — This great scholar is, at the same time, a great artist and profoundly Attic. He is such, first, in his invention, which is very different from that of Herodotus. While the latter, with his innumerable episodes and gentle good humor, recalls the old epic, the former is brief and effective like tragedy or oratory. The characteristic is noticeable even in the general plan of his work. What he wished to recount is the political and military struggle between Athens and Sparta — nothing more. It would not have been difficult for him to attach to his picture of the Peloponnesian War a more complete one of contemporary Greece. Modern scholarship would have been infinitely grateful to him for such a picture. He understood so well the intellectual greatness of his country, as he has shown in the *Funeral Oration*, and he had such a profound understanding of politics; what a pity that he did not try to give us an account of the party struggles and the literary life of the age of Pericles! And then, what a rigorous method he follows in voluntarily concentrating all his attention on the period he has

<sup>1</sup> I, 22, 1.

selected! What floods of light he has poured upon it! What breadth of composition characterizes the magnificent introduction which forms the first book of our manuscripts! Aside from eight or ten passages, generally very short, which a modern writer would have relegated to notes or appendices, he goes straight to his goal with unswerving rectitude, without distraction or weariness. The same high degree of merit is found in each passage considered by itself, be it narrative, description, or oratory. The story of the Sicilian expedition, which occupies two books, is composed like a well-organized drama: first, the history of the early successes of the Athenians; then, when they seem about to triumph, the arrival of Gylippus; and from that moment, faint successes, reverses, disasters, and the eventual catastrophe. All this seizes the reader's imagination with irresistible force. The story of the siege of Plataea is no less touching. With these longer narratives are given a multitude of short ones—land and sea battles, sieges, surprises, civil strifes—which present the same good qualities. There are, however, in the history, some portions that seem dry, some narratives that his unyielding chronology led him to break in pieces. This excessive scruple for chronology, this dryness in the enumeration of the monotonous and unimportant incidents of war, is due really to a meritorious striving for scrupulous exactness. The resulting stiffness is the relic of archaism in his otherwise vigorous art. Of the contrary, in his *résumés* of situations—the general pictures of which we have already spoken—the writer's power of invention achieves the happiest results. It is eloquent history in the truest sense of the term—eloquent not by a vain display of artificial rhetoric, but by concentration of thought upon one subject that is never lost from view. The eloquence had its proper place in his harangues. It is perhaps the part of his work, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in which the force of his genius is most manifest. The discourses are ordinarily constructed on a clear and simple plan: a few lines of exordium, a discussion, methodically divided and well carried on, a short peroration, deducing from the discussion a conclusion that is logical and correct. There is not the luxuriance of divisions and subdivisions in which the teachers of rhetoric were then beginning to indulge. But if the fundamental quality of oratorical composition is in the firm connection and rigorous concatenation of the parts, then the discourses of Thucydides are admirably composed. For the rostrum they would be too condensed, too heavily loaded with thought. Each one is an inexhaustible mine of political observations and profound reflections. Before auditors, more air and space would be necessary. But they

were addressed to readers; it is written, not spoken, oratory. Considered from this, the true point of view, they escape the censure orators might be tempted to give them. Montesquieu need not have the fulness of Bossuet.

The style of Thucydides owes much to Gorgias, Prodicus, and Antiphon; but what the historian borrows from his masters is, so to speak, the grammar of the style. What he adds from his own resources is the genius which enlarges the traditional moulds and makes them brilliant. More than his masters, he renews the language for the expression of new ideas. He manages it with remarkable power. He unites profundity with precision, and abundance of ideas with a concentration so strong that it becomes at times obscure. Subtle, scholarly, painstaking precision, mingled with grandeur, brilliance, terse brevity, and quick movements of a thought that struggles against the insufficiencies of the language — all this produces a style in which effort is still manifest, which is not the final product of Atticism, but in which its essential qualities are seen displayed with incomparable vigor. His vocabulary, like that of Gorgias, admits sometimes, though more sparingly, antiquated or poetic words to lend greater nobility to the language; but what chiefly characterizes it is a multitude of new words or words renewed by an unusual use, employed to give the thought more precision or more relief. His boldness in this respect is surprising. Not only are neuter adjectives used substantively, but they are themselves construed with other adjectives that qualify or limit them. Participles are similarly treated. Verbal substantives denoting the actor (termination *-της*) or the action (termination *-σις*) abound in place of the corresponding verbs, which are more common in the spoken language. Substantives are grammatically construed — with unusual boldness — as at once both verbs and substantives, sometimes preserving their verbal nature in that they govern complements and object clauses. The author is fond of verbs composed with the help of prepositions for expressing subtle relations. He opposes and distinguishes synonymes after the manner of Prodicus. As in all the dignified prose of the time, the diction is essentially antithetic. As the word “antithesis” finally took on a very narrow rhetorical usage, we may define ourselves by saying that the ideas constantly tend to stand opposed in pairs (*ἀντικειμένη λέξις*). Now it is the play of *μὲν* and *δέ* which shows the relation, now that of *τε* and *καί*; or it is the affirmative statement succeeding the negative (*οὐκ . . . ἀλλά*). Very often appearance is opposed to reality (*λόγῳ μὲν . . . ἔργῳ δέ*). To emphasize his oppositions he does not disdain the use of parallelisms and assonances: but while the sophists



made these simply manipulations of words, Thucydides put into them a wealth of ideas. Like Gorgias again, and like Antiphon, Thucydides, with his rather stiff precision, rarely uses the figures of invention that abound in Demosthenes. The only ones he employs frequently are the interrogations, the simplest and most dialectic of all. Ordinarily, even passion is concealed beneath a designedly cold form. Like the ancient Attic orators, he preserves on the rostrum a serious mien, with his hands concealed by his mantle. These antithetic phrases are laboriously opposed to each other, and do not flow along easily. He aims much less at elegant clearness than at force and emphasis. His syntax is very free; his words are arranged, not in the simplest, clearest order, but to suit the flights of a strong, ready imagination, like that of a poet. The symmetry of phrases is brusquely interrupted to secure greater effect. He multiplies ellipses, and suppresses words that are useful only for ease of discourse, yet retard the movement. He unites strangely differing constructions which another writer would distinguish with care. Sometimes he has very long sentences, and it requires an effort to combine all the secondary ideas around the principal one. He has not yet the skill necessary to handle a period in the strict sense of the word, where every element of the thought arranges itself in proper order. The long sentences are often ungrammatical and confused, yet full of spirit and powerful. In reading them, one is tempted to think of Saint-Simon, who puts together, with as rough a hand, ungrammatical, jarring sentences. The difference is that the Frenchman has more fire, enthusiasm, spleen. The passion of Thucydides (there always is a sort of passion in spontaneous, disconnected writing) is chiefly intellectual; he is pure spirit contending against a pure idea. When one speaks of his style, it is usual to distinguish that of the speeches from that of the narratives. The latter are clearer; the former, because of their fulness of thought and vivacity of imagination, are more terse and obscure. The discourses are the marrow of his work; if he had written only narratives, we should not see so well, owing to the affinities of all sorts by which he is connected with his time, the striking originality of his genius—abrupt and subtle, summary and complicated, strong and delicate.

His work is one of the most finished examples of history—a work of both science and art in every sense of the word. Its perfection both provoked and defied imitation. It may be said that his loftiest qualities, the scientific spirit and the impartiality, did not excite emulation so much as did his art—at least in its superficial, tangible elements. Soon, however, under the influence of an advancing

rhetoric, a different ideal was to be substituted for that of the great historian. This we shall study when we reach the fourth century.

**4. Imitators of Thucydides: Xenophon; Philistus.** — Among the foremost imitators of Thucydides must be put Xenophon. According to certain traditions, he published the earlier historian's work, which was left incomplete. At any rate, he continued it in his own *Hellenica*. But the historian in Xenophon cannot be considered apart from the philosopher and moralist. Hence we shall return to the *Hellenica* in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here that his example showed how far most of the genius of Thucydides was inimitable, even for the most sympathetic talent.

Philistus, born at Syracuse in the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, a courtier of Dionysius the Elder, but exiled by him in 385, withdrew to Magna Græcia to compose there his historical works.<sup>1</sup> Recalled in 368 by Dionysius the Younger, he opposed the influences of Dio and Plato over that prince. When Dio renounced his allegiance, Philistus, then general of Dionysius, was taken prisoner in battle and put to death. He had written various works, forming a complete history of Sicily down to Dionysius the Younger. It was a long composition, but we have only some insignificant fragments. Ancient critics say that he meant to imitate Thucydides. Like him, he devoted himself scrupulously to his subject, allowing himself no digressions. Like him, too, he wrote in a terse, brief style, aiming rather at emphasis than grace. The imitation, unfortunately, extended neither to the scientific spirit nor the impartiality of his model. He seems to have had a fondness for legends. He was partial, even falsely so, to the tyrants, and pursued their adversaries with his attacks. Really he was a historian of the second rank. The Alexandrians excluded him from their canon.

**5. Historians of the School of Isocrates: Ephorus.** — After the imitators of Thucydides come the disciples of Isocrates. The orator's abundant, flowery, harmonious eloquence so enchanted Greece that his influence was universal. In history it held sovereign sway, and though a historian's style might thereby gain a pleasing elegance, the seriousness of the thought diminished. Ephorus and Theopompus, both disciples of Isocrates, inaugurated the new fashion.<sup>2</sup>

Ephorus, born at Cyme in Æolis in the first half of the fourth century, came to Athens and received there the instruction of the author of the *Panegyricus*. He tried at first, it is said, to practise oratory, but with only meagre success. Isocrates then induced him

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum*, I.

<sup>2</sup> [Fragments of Ephorus in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Græc.* I. 234-237; IV. 641-642. Fragments of Theopompus in *ibid.* I. 278-333; and IV. 643-645. — Tr.]

to become a historian, and to turn by preference to the history of remoter times as being more suited to the peaceful, quiet character of his genius. According to Suidas, what Isocrates said was that Ephorus needed the spur and Theopompus the rein. He reserved for Theopompus the history of more recent times, which was filled with strife and passion, and so better suited to the temperament of an orator. Ephorus, in fact, wrote a great history of the ancient world from the return of the Heraclidæ to the capture of Corinth by Philip in 340. It was a vast composition, divided by the author into thirty books, each of which had a preface preceding it. Not only Greece, but all parts of the ancient world in relation with Greece, such as Persia and Carthage, were embraced in his work. Polybius expressly commended the design governing the composition of this universal history. The work, though constantly used by his successors, has been lost. Yet we can still discern some of its interesting features.

He had the insight to see that, in the study of very ancient matters, one must guard against too detailed an account. Precision in that case betokens late invention.<sup>1</sup> He had a feeling that criticism was necessary; but he seems, in practice, to have sought to correct the old legends by explanations due to a very superficial rationalism. A better feature, no doubt, in the parts of his work where he treated remote epochs and distant lands, is the laborious application which enabled him to accumulate so much material. Its value, however, is not uniform throughout. In the latter part of his history he likewise evinced diligent research and extensive information. He had recourse at times to authentic documents. Yet, when one sees in Diodorus to what puerile motives he attributed the part of Pericles in bringing on the Peloponnesian War, one doubts whether the learned compiler comprehended politics. Polybius reproaches him also with having shown great ignorance of military details and with having described battles that would be wholly incomprehensible to a professional soldier.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, he swelled the number of combatants and slain, and put florid discourses into the mouths of his characters. Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Cicero vaunt the suavity of his discourse. The elegant clearness of his composition was praised also; general reflections and episodic dissertations were wrought into the narrative without breaking it; these dissertations were highly appreciated by Polybius.<sup>3</sup> On the whole, Ephorus was a good pupil of Isocrates and a diligent compiler; but this is not sufficient for a historian of the first rank.

**6. Theopompus.** — Born at Chios, in 380, Theopompus belonged

<sup>1</sup> Fr. I. Müller.

<sup>2</sup> Polyb. XII. 25 F.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* XII, 28.

to a rich, aristocratic family. His youth was passed in exile, a democratic revolution having banished his family from Chios. In 360 he was the pupil of Isocrates at Athens at the same time as Ephorus. We have already noted what opinion the master held concerning the two disciples. As an orator, Theopompus had great success with his epideictic speeches. His *Eulogy of Mausolus* was celebrated. In one of his prefaces, with a vanity quite in keeping with Isocrates, he said that there was not a celebrated place in Greece where he had not won the favor of the people.<sup>1</sup> His travels and reputation won him the acquaintance of all the statesmen of his time. The friendship of Alexander enabled him to return to Chios; but after the king of Macedon's death, he was exiled anew, and recommenced his wandering life. It is not known where and when he died. He left numerous speeches and various historical works, of which by far the most important was the *History of Philip* (Φιλίππικὰ), in fifty-eight books. It recounted the history of Greece from 362, when the *Hellenica* of Xenophon ceased, until the death of Philip in 336. Some fragments still preserved are of considerable interest.

The title of the work is in itself a happy invention: *History of Philip*. This signifies at once that Philip had become the centre of the Greek world, and that all the cities, including Athens, were dependent on him. It is a profound view, though coming from no desire to flatter Philip; for no one had spoken more ill of him than Theopompus. About the central figure of Philip was developed the whole life of Greece during the twenty years preceding the hegemony of Macedon. By Theopompus, as by Ephorus, the principal subject was often put aside for a time, yet without breaking the thread. Upon this great, pliant frame, the former wrought the history of the particular cities, together with geographical descriptions, accounts of manners, anecdotes about celebrated men, and even fables and local legends. One book of his history was especially devoted to the demagogues of Athens, whose private and public life he studied. The luxury, debauchery, and fantastic folly of foreign kings and Greek tyrants — Cotys, Strato of Sidon, Dionysius of Syracuse, or Philip of Macedon — had found in him an attentive and severe painter. Never had observation of individual character occupied so much place in a historical work.

The extent of his researches and information, as in the case of Ephorus, must have been very great. Polybius recognizes in him a comprehension of politics, if not of war, better than that of Ephorus. What the ancients most disliked in him was his fondness

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 26, Müller.



of speaking ill of every one: *maledicentissimus scriptor*, says Cornelius Nepos, who expresses only the general opinion. It is certain that a writer endowed with a talent for invective, and given an education more oratorical than scientific, was likely to see too often only the bad side, and to censure for the mere love of doing so. But perhaps it would not be right to accept this judgment without reserve. Dionysius of Halicarnassus observes that, even if he was one of the most censorious historians, it was partly because he was one of the most clear-sighted. He was a psychologist; he loved to search out the hidden motives of an action. He studied the private life of statesmen, looked into the recesses of their souls. He was in many ways a predecessor of Tacitus. In history, psychologists are rarely optimistic. It may be admitted that at times he was rather excessive in adverse criticism, and that the pleasure of thundering against vice led him to multiply to excess those moral pictures in which his immense love of display found scope to express itself.

As a writer, he had the merits of the school of Isocrates — elegance, harmony, and clearness of composition; and also its defects — unreasonable, immoderate love of finely formed sentences, and rather ridiculous sophistic infatuation. He added the personal merit of passion and vehemence, in which, according to Dionysius, he sometimes approached Demosthenes. Some fairly long fragments on Philip's court give us an idea of his vehemence. Though brilliant, it has a spiteful pungency apparently more in place in a polemic than in history. Another fragment, describing the pomp of the expedition of a Persian king (Artaxerxes Ochus?) in Egypt, is of really picturesque magnificence. We are tempted, however, to censure its oratorical turn and the formality of its periods. All the pupils of Isocrates were decidedly too eloquent. How much superior is the peculiar artlessness of Herodotus, the serious gravity of Thucydides, to all these harmonious, grandiloquent sentences. Despite their learning and talent, Ephorus and Theopompus journeyed along the wrong route. The tyranny of rhetoric had begun. History, though it had scarcely attained to its ripest powers, was falling into decadence.

**7. The Authors of *Atthids*. Æneas the Tactician.** — We have almost finished now the picture of the development of history in the fourth century. A word must be spoken yet, however, about those belated successors of the logographers, who composed, in the first half of the century, under the name of *Atthids*, some chronicles of Athens, analogous, probably, to those of Hellanicus. For Clitodemus and Phanodemus, authors of *Atthids*, are intermediate between the old logographers and the scholars who, in the third century, adopted the form of composition again, and gave it a new life.

Besides historians proper, let us mention also a military tactician, who borrowed from the historians the materials for his work. Under the name of *Æneas*, perhaps the *Æneas* of Stymphalos mentioned in the *Hellenica*, we possess a treatise on the defence of strongholds, extracted from a longer work on strategy composed about the middle of the fourth century. The little work is filled with personal anecdotes, and examples selected from Thucydides and Xenophon. It is interesting even for the untechnical. As it is written in the Attic dialect, although its author was probably an Arcadian, it is very naturally connected with the historical works treated in this chapter.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Text of *Æneas* by Hercher, Berlin, 1870 ; and by A. Hug, Leipsic, 1874. — Tr.]

## CHAPTER XIX

### ATTIC PHILOSOPHY

1. The Disciples of Socrates. 2. Xenophon: his Life and Works; General Character of his Genius. 3. His Socratic Writings. 4. His Political and Military Writings. 5. His Historical Writings. 6. Conclusion. The *Cyropædia*. 7. Plato: his Life and Career. 8. Platonic Doctrine. 9. The Art of Dialogue in Plato. 10. His Personages and Characters. 11. His Style. 12. The Invention of the Dialogues. 13. Plato's Atticism. 14. The Academy after Plato. 15. Aristotle: his Life; Immensity of his Work. 16. Principles of his Philosophy. 17. General View of his Works. Summary Classification. 18. Some Theories of Aristotle. 19. Aristotle as a Writer. Conclusion. 20. The Lyceum after Aristotle: Theophrastus.

**1. The Disciples of Socrates.**—Apart from chance interlocutors with whom Socrates entered into discussion, he united around himself a group of faithful companions, mostly young men, who loved his conversation and tried to become imbued with his ideas. These may not have been “disciples” (μαθηταί) in the proper sense of the word, or at least Socrates did not wish them to be so considered; for he said that, knowing nothing himself, he could teach them nothing except his ignorance. They were friends on familiar terms with him, in common with whom he sought for truth (οἱ ἐταῖροι, οἱ συνόντες, οἱ ὁµιληταί). Among these companions whom we, nevertheless, shall call disciples, some loved chiefly his personality, others his dialectic method, others his moral instruction. Several of them founded schools. Others were merely writers who had come under his personal influence. Some few, like Crito or Chæredemus, were content to live in his company. These wrote nothing, and cannot be treated in the history of literature.

Plato is the most illustrious of those who founded schools. But still others had an important place in the history of Greek philosophy, such as Phædo, founder of the school of Elis or Eretria; Euclid, founder of the school of Megara; Antisthenes, the chief of the Cynics; and Aristippus, who founded the Cyrenaic school. To Phædo and Euclid are attributed some dialogues, yet not many. We have almost nothing of them, and their authenticity may be questioned. Antisthenes was a fertile and remarkable writer. He wrote some commentaries on Homer, now lost; some sophistic discourses,

of which we have two probably authentic passages, rather dull on the whole (the discourses of Ajax and Œdipus in the dispute about the arms of Achilles);<sup>1</sup> and some forty philosophic works, many of them dialogues. In these he develops the Cynic doctrines: the vanity of all knowledge based on general ideas; and the necessity of practical virtue, or wisdom, which consists in being emancipated from all need. The writings of Antisthenes were considered in antiquity literary works of great merit; apparently they were thought eloquent and spirited; we can no longer judge of the matter. Aristippus of Cyrene also wrote extensively.<sup>2</sup> He made pleasure the end of life, but wished the search for it to be governed by reason. He expounded his doctrines in dialogues of which we know almost nothing.

Other disciples of Socrates, without becoming heads of schools, were philosophic writers. The most important one was Æschines, son of Lysanias, both orator and philosopher, whose Socratic dialogues, seven in number, won him a great reputation. He reproduced so truthfully the tone of Socrates's conversation that Menedemus of Eretria, his enemy, accused him of having stolen the dialogues from Socrates himself, with the complicity of Xanthippe. No better eulogy of his genius could be pronounced. His writings are to-day wholly unknown.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, a closely related group comprises two other, semi-philosophic writers, who have a prominent place in the history of literature: Isocrates, whom we shall meet later among the orators; and Xenophon, who, although a many-sided writer, is sufficiently a moralist and sufficiently Socratic to obtain a place among the philosophers, or at least beside them.

**2. Xenophon: his Life and Works; General Character of his Genius.**<sup>4</sup>—Xenophon, son of Gryllus, was born in the Attic deme of Erchia, probably between 430 and 425. He is said to have taken

<sup>1</sup> Published by Blass in his *Antiphon*, *sup. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Fragments in Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* II, p. 274 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Fragments in Hermann, *De Æschinis Socratici Reliquiis*, Göttingen, 1850.

<sup>4</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Complete editions; Didot Collection, Paris, 1839; Sauppe, Leipsic, Tauchnitz, 1867–1870; Dindorf, Leipsic, Teubner, several editions. Editions of separate works: *Memorabilia* by Breitenbach, Weidemann; and by Gilbert, Teubner; *Anabasis* by Vollbrecht, Teubner; *Cyropaedia* by Hertlein, Weidemann; and by A. Hug, Teubner; *Economics* by Ch. Graux, Paris, Hachette, 1878; and by Holden, London, 1889. A complete English edition of the *Works* was begun by Burnet, Oxford, 1900.

English translation by H. G. Dakyns, London, 1890–1897; *The Art of Horsemanship*, M. H. Morgan, Boston, 1893; French translations by Pessoneaux, Charpentier; and by Talbot, Hachette. *Dictionary of the Anabasis* by White and Morgan, Boston, 1892.

Consult: Hartmann, *Analecta Xenophontea* and *Analecta Xen. Nova*, Leyden, 1887 and 1889.



lessons of Prodicus. But he was attached chiefly to Socrates, whose influence over him was profound. Diogenes Laertius reports as follows the origin of this relation: One day Socrates met the young Xenophon without knowing him, and noticing his fair countenance, which seemed the very mirror of honesty, prevented him with his cane from passing, and asked him where to go to buy the necessaries of life. "To the market," said Xenophon. "And to become an honest man, where must one go?" Xenophon knew not how to reply. "Follow me, then," said Socrates. The anecdote is pretty, even if it be not true.

In 401, when Cyrus was making ready for his expedition against his brother, a friend of Xenophon, the Boeotian Proxenus, who was about to take part in it, induced Xenophon to do likewise. Young, active, adventurous, he was persuaded without delay. Yet he asked advice of Socrates, who bade him consult the oracle at Delphi. Xenophon tells us that he had the adroitness so to put his question to the god as to obtain the response he wished. Then he departed, being "neither general, nor officer, nor soldier," but a simple amateur, eager to visit a strange land and take part in an interesting military expedition. Step by step, circumstances made him the real chief of the Ten Thousand, and he directed their retreat.

Having again obtained freedom, he returned to Greece, probably to Athens; but he did not remain long. In 396 Agesilaus was commissioned to prosecute the war against Pharnabazus. Xenophon accompanied him to Asia Minor. When the Spartan king was recalled to Greece because his country was threatened by a coalition between Thebes and Athens, Xenophon returned with him, and so was present in the Spartan ranks at the battle of Coronæa, where his countrymen were fighting against Agesilaus. In Greece in the fourth century, wars between cities were, in a sense, civil wars; an aristocratic Athenian readily took sides with Lacedæmon. Xenophon probably thought himself more closely attached to the person of Agesilaus than to the democracy of Athens; and so what we consider a crime against Athens seemed to him and to many of his countrymen quite the natural thing.

About the same time the state passed against him a decree of exile. There has been much discussion about its date and causes. It seems to have been due to the part he took in the expedition against Pharnabazus, who was the ally of Athens. In any case, Xenophon was deprived of his property and obliged to live abroad. He went to the Peloponnesus, where the Lacedæmonians gave him a rich domain near Scillus in the plain of Elis. He lived there many years with his wife and two sons, Gryllus and Diodorus.

"Here he passed his time," says Diogenes Laertius, "receiving his friends and writing his works." He has left us a pleasing picture of his domain, with its great forests and its little temple of Artemis.<sup>1</sup> He was obliged to quit it in 371, owing to a war between Sparta and Elis. He retired first to Lepreum, and then to Corinth.

It is not certain that he returned to Athens; but the decree of exile was finally revoked, probably about 365. At this time, Athens and Sparta were about to form an alliance against Thebes. In 362 his two sons were found in the ranks of the Athenian cavalry that fought by the side of the Spartans at Mantinæa. Gryllus perished on the battle-field. His glorious death, celebrated in numerous contemporary writings, sealed the reconciliation between Xenophon and his country. He survived his son apparently about ten years.

Xenophon left numerous works, varying much in subject and form. Omitting the *Republic of Athens*, which cannot be his, and the treatise *On Hunting*, whose authenticity is at least doubtful,<sup>2</sup> there remain a dozen works, some of great importance. Several relate to Socrates (*Apology*, *Memorabilia*, *Symposium*); others to the active life of a soldier or a commander-in-chief (*Anabasis*, *Hippiarchus*, *On Horsemanship*, *Cyropædia*); others to family and city life (*Economics*, *Republic of Sparta*, *Hiero*, *Revenues*); and some to history (*Agesilaus*, *Hellenica*). Most of them seem to have been composed at Scillus in the last years of his life. Whatever their dates, the essential unity of their inspiration is everywhere visible.

He is a perfect specimen of the καλὸς καγαθός, the "honest man," as conceived by the Athenian mind at the end of the fifth century: rich, well-born, vigorous, fond of active life, of sound, well-balanced mind, judicious, not over enthusiastic, obedient to reason, thoughtful of good order and harmony, and as highly educated as was possible for a well-bred Athenian in the time of the sophists and Socrates. To this essential, general character, he added a large personal element; a liking for reasoning about actions and discussing them. Under different conditions, he might not have written anything; but one cannot think of his remaining silent, and not expressing the theories he formed from the incidents of experience. He has a genius for dissertation and for giving instruction. If he had not known

<sup>1</sup> *Anab.* V, 3, 8-13.

<sup>2</sup> The treatise *On Hunting* is of mediocre interest, but that on the *Republic of Athens* is well worthy of attention. It is the work of a clear-sighted aristocrat, who, during the first half of the Peloponnesian War, sets forth with rare acumen the fundamental principles of the policy followed by the Athenian democracy, commending it from the practical standpoint, but condemning it outright from the moral one. The text is faulty in places, but the work is collectively of the deepest interest. One may well regret that the author is not known.

Socrates, his taste would have found expression less methodically, yet scarcely less abundantly. He found in Socrates, apart from religious and practical morals perfectly in accord with his sentiments, a process of dialectic that revealed to him his talent, and that he employed at once with a copious, lucid facility well befitting a discursive writer. He had still another characteristic: a vein of fantastic, romantic imagination. His fondness for theory and thoroughly reasonable order was satisfied only in ideal constructions, in which the practical side of his mind could be united with complete freedom of imagination. He does not stop long over the complexities of his subject. He is optimistic and somewhat artless. He resembles Saint-Pierre and Fénelon in believing in providential harmonies, ideal Salentes and imaginary Sesostrises; and he talks incessantly, like Mentor.

His art is adapted to his intellectual nature with perfect exactness and expresses it faithfully. He is not an artist of the first order, but there is much that is pleasing, with his ingenious clearness, his want of pretension, his *iucunditas inaffectata*, in the words of Quintilian, where the "honest man" expresses himself in good-standard Attic.

Purists have noted in his language some forms peculiar to himself. Born in a rustic deme and estranged from Athens during the greater part of his life, he does not wholly follow the city's fashions. His diction is Attic slightly tinged with the archaism of the country. His style is simple and elegant, better defined than that of Herodotus, but less delicately artistic than that of Lysias. It is the spoken language of a lucid intelligence, more concerned with things than words, and excelling in the power of arranging its ideas. He always proceeds by analysis, and enumerates all the parts of a whole, sometimes with rather slow progress, yet clearly and pleasingly. Sometimes he marks similarity of thought by external symmetry of words, yet lightly, without emphasis, and even in a somewhat superficial manner. In the passages that he wishes to render exceptionally vigorous, he imitates chiefly Prodicus. His invention is like his style, orderly, easy, lucid, and without much concentration or vigor. It is juxtaposition rather than organization. His dissertation imitating Socrates is easy-going, lucid, not showy, sometimes rather lengthy. In oratorical art, these qualities give rise to a penetrating, persuasive eloquence, addressed to reason rather than to sentiment, appealing to practical interests rather than to generous emotion, to facts rather than ideas, and calculated to lead to wise resolutions. The discourses which he addresses to the Ten Thousand in the *Anabasis* are excellent models from this point of view. One must

not expect in his narrative profound force, brilliant lustre, intensity of life, or unusual scientific precision; but the charm that a narration obtains from clear first impression, judicious choice of details, evident order, and easy, gentle movement, is found in many of his narratives. The *Anabasis* and the *Cyropædia* contain numerous examples. If he wishes to go further, to represent, like a dramatic poet, fictitious or real personages, such as Socrates and Hiero, or romantic heroes like some of those in the *Cyropædia*, he is still pleasing; but he does not attain really creative art. He lacks the best qualities of drama, the power to give life to beings different from his own personality. All his characters, including Socrates, assume something of his likeness; and all come more or less short of seeming real. They are abstract and too talkative. Some portraits, however, are sketched with grace; for example, that of Cyrus in childhood, in the *Cyropædia*; but the drawing is always light and unimpressive.

**3. His Socratic Writings.**—Xenophon gives Socrates a part in the *Apology*, the *Memorabilia*, the *Economics*, and the *Symposium*. But the *Economics*, although early connected with the *Memorabilia*, really springs from a different and more personal inspiration, which we shall discuss later on. The *Apology*, which, perhaps, was part of a first edition of the *Memorabilia*, is not important. There remain the *Symposium* and the *Memorabilia*.

The *Symposium* appears to have been written as a sort of response to the *Symposium* of Plato, with the claim of being truer. The setting, however, is fictitious; for the date of the narrative is put in the year 421, when Xenophon could not have been a witness of the events, and certainly could not have remembered them. The discussion turns on love as in Plato's *Symposium*. There are pleasing details, especially the description of the *hyporchema* which ends the festival; but to appreciate the amiable composition fully, one must lose sight of the other *Symposium* altogether. Though perhaps less faithful to the strict reality of facts, it is only the other that will last forever in the remembrance of posterity.

The *Memorabilia* is the chief work in the group consecrated to the memory of Socrates. Taking away some few chapters that give double accounts of the same events or break the continuity of thought, and that come probably, with many alterations of detail, from a double edition of the work, its plan is simple. In a sort of preface at the beginning, the author replies to the positive counts in the accusation against Socrates—not only those of Anytus and Meletus, but also those of a sophist, a certain Polycrates, who had attacked his memory later, six or seven years after his death. After this summary refutation, he attempts to substitute a truthful



portrait of Socrates for the false image that had been conceived of him. In a few pages he describes his life. Then in the body of the work he exemplifies by dialogues the instruction of Socrates concerning piety, temperance, the principal virtues, the useful arts, and dialectic. A short conclusion terminates the work. There is no doubt that these dialogues, which are given as having come from Socrates, are real, though somewhat free, restorations. In order to understand Socrates well, it is, however, indispensable to correct them by the help of Plato. From this point of view, they have a no less considerable documentary value. Moreover, they help us to understand Xenophon. The manner in which the teachings of Socrates are narrowed, rendered crude, limited to a utilitarian point of view, wonderfully discloses Xenophon himself. Religious metaphysics are given little place. Dialectic is scarcely more than a method of neat, precise conversation, a process of potent eloquence. Military art, on the contrary, is emphasized out of all proportion. A certain goodness and tenderness of heart in the discussion relating to the family inspire really exquisite pages, of which Xenophon no doubt deserves to receive part of the honor as well as Socrates; for they manifest the spirit of the *Economics*.

**4. His Political and Military Writings.** — Xenophon's political idea is both military and paternal. His ideas on the functions of a general or of the head of a family are, as it were, the preface of his ideas on the organization of a city. It is natural, then, to unite into one group the numerous writings in which he has touched upon these subjects.

In the *Anabasis*, under the form of military memoirs, and in the *Cyropædia*, under the form of historic romance, Xenophon has very clearly defined his idea of a commander. The true general is brave, vigorous, adroit in stratagem, fertile in resources; but above all he is a leader of men. He is an intelligence and a will — a persuasive orator, capable of infusing his own spirit into the crowd of those who listen to him, and of making their obedience easy by making it voluntary. Socrates, the true general, who has a "royal spirit," expects nothing but from persuasion; or at least, if he has recourse to force, it is only as a last resort and by exception, when speech proves impotent. But for him who can use it, speech is rarely impotent, if it is reasonable and gets its authority from a confidence based upon experience. The philosophy of military command inspires all the author's political and military writings, and is found even in the other works, when occasion allows. Added to the precise knowledge of the specialist, it increases the value of the brief work entitled *Hipparchus*. This is a discourse addressed to a friend who

has just been given command of a detachment of Athenian cavalry. His counsels show the experience and authority of a man already recognized as a master in these matters, and touch upon the recruiting of cavaliers, the management of troops, the exercises, and the manner of fighting with cavalry. Two or three details are peculiarly characteristic of his spirit: he wishes that the chief inspire love and confidence in his troops, that he be mindful of all the details even in the time of peace, and that he be pious, to gain the favor of the gods. Xenophon feels an artistic admiration for a splendid troop of cavaliers. There is the same spirit in the brief treatise *On Horsemanship*. Amid precise technical details of an art that he understood thoroughly, he has charming passages upon the beauty of a well-trained horse prancing along, or on the resemblance of an adroit cavalier with the equestrian images of gods and heroes as sculptured, for example, by Phidias. We shall consider later the *Cyropædia* and the *Anabasis*, in which he has written more than simply his ideal of a commander.

Aside from the profession of arms, the great practical school of the statesman, in the eyes of Xenophon, is the family. Governing a household well is like governing a city. The *Economics* develops his views on the subject. Socrates is made the principal personage of the dialogue. But in reality he disappears behind Ischomachus, whose words he utters, and whose name is only a pseudonym for Xenophon. About agriculture or even about governing a household, Socrates, who never left Athens, but passed his life in the public square, evidently knew less than the owner of the domain at Scillus. Notwithstanding some pages of rather arid dialectic, the *Economics* is one of his most enjoyable writings. Nowhere has he given more of his most amiable qualities: lofty ideals of family duties and pleasures, affectionate, winsome conduct, and fondness for healthy, simple exercise. He passionately loves that of which he speaks, life in the fields, surrounded by honest affections and regular activity. His hero, Ischomachus, does not dream over the beauty of nature, like Vergil: nor sleep in the Epicurean quiet of Horace, happy in being free for a little time from the turmoil of the city. He loves agriculture because it is a useful art, worthy of a free man, occupying without absorbing him, and demanding rather moral quality than knowledge of technical facts. He can govern his household. He knows how to win his wife's affections and the respect of his slaves. His way of educating his wife is described in exquisite form. She was fifteen and ignorant. He began by praying to the gods with her to give her confidence. Only then did he begin to teach her, to direct her with reason and gentleness, delighting to explain to her

her duties and see her eager to perform them. "One of your functions, which may not please you, will be to watch over servants in their illness and seek to cure them." "Why!" replied the young woman, "I could find no more agreeable occupation, since they will be grateful for my attentions, and more attached to me than before." The slaves, in fact, in this household, are considered as men. It is not Ischomachus who, following the precept of Cato, would sell old slaves with old horses and old iron. If he found power of reason in a slave, he treated him as a free man.<sup>1</sup> Few writings do more honor than the *Economics*, not only to Xenophon, but to Athenian civilization in general.

The love of order and reason so strong in Xenophon could scarcely find satisfaction in the tumultuous, passionate life of the Athenian democracy. Like Socrates, he had little respect for the popular assemblies.<sup>2</sup> Although he seems to have thought that educated men should take part in politics,<sup>3</sup> and though, toward the end of his life, he wrote the treatise *On Revenues* to give his country wise council on the administration of her finances, it is clear that his ideal was far different from the picture presented by the democratic city of his time. He found it realized more completely at Sparta, as did many Athenian aristocrats; but even Sparta, on the whole, was far from satisfying him. The treatise on the *Republic of Sparta* is much less a faithful than an idealized portrait. What he praises in the little work are the laws of Lycurgus on education, the public tables, the gymnasium, the absence of commerce and industry, the respect for laws and magistrates, and above all, the military institutions which produce an army so warlike and well disciplined. He avows, in an interesting epilogue, that the Sparta he has described no longer exists, and that, in fact, he has described a dream. A dream, too, is the dialogue entitled *Hiero*, and the whole *Cyropædia*. In the *Hiero*, he explains how even a tyrant can secure his happiness through that of his subjects. The poet Simonides teaches Hiero of Syracuse wise maxims, in which are evinced the ingenious spirit of Xenophon and his sometimes rather commonplace good sense. It is evident, also, that the rule of one man, if exercised reasonably and gently, in no way displeased him. The same ideal is found in the *Cyropædia*. In the first book, there is a picture of the Persian city in which young Cyrus was brought up: a real Salente, with its "free square" (*ἀγορὰ ἐλευθέρα*), in which stand the king's palace and the tribunal, but from which merchants are excluded as likely to disturb the good order of the exercises. In this Persian city, each age has its part and its proper functions: a good education is the in-

<sup>1</sup> *Econ.* 14, 9.<sup>2</sup> *Mem.* I, 2, 9-10; cf. III, 5.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* III, 7.

dispensable condition for filling offices of state. In the later books, Cyrus organizes his empire, which is partly obtained by conquest. From one boundary to the other, all is brought about by the king's will, yet wisely, gently, even agreeably. The Persian empire is like a great army at rest, with Cyrus as general. He is, moreover, a general fully meeting Xenophon's ideals — as liberal as could be, accomplishing his aims by persuasion rather than by force. There is no doubt that, in the last analysis, this was the supreme goal toward which tended, in politics, the thought of the leader of the Ten Thousand, the head of yonder family at Scillus, exiled from Athens by the democracy which had put Socrates to death.

**5. His Historical Writings.** — The *Anabasis* is the story of the expedition (*ἀνάβασις*) of the Ten Thousand, and particularly of the great part which Xenophon was given in it. We have, then, personal memoirs as well as a strictly historical work. Other participants, particularly Sophænetus of Stymphalus, had given an account of it. Xenophon probably did not have the importance which he claims; for various Greek historians, using the same sources, were able to write the history of the campaign without even naming him. He afterward gave his account of the events; and, having a didactic spirit, used the opportunity to give in detail his motives in each circumstance, sometimes in the course of the story itself, sometimes through discourses addressed to the soldiers. He speaks of himself in the third person. The work appeared at first under the pseudonym of Themistogenes of Syracuse, but this was only a light veil easily pierced through. What is the historic value of the *Anabasis*? It is evident at once that the numerous discourses have been freely recast with an evident apologetic and didactic purpose. In the narrative itself, it is easy to see that, notwithstanding his modest tone and assumed good taste, he was at pains not to let himself be forgotten. Hence the *Anabasis* is indefinite in character, and cannot all be accepted literally. Yet with the exception noted, one must admit that it is a masterpiece, and that everywhere, when the design of apology and instruction is not too evident, the truth of the statements and the interest of the descriptions merit only eulogy. In the first two books, where Xenophon scarcely appears in person, he recounts the departure of the Greeks, the advance of the troops with Cyrus, the battle of Cunaxa, the prince's death, and the assassination of Clearchus and the remaining Greek generals. The narrative is vivid, hurried, elegant. The account of Cunaxa is one of the best reports of a battle in Greek literature — clear and picturesque, without digression or verbosity. The portraits of the generals are skillfully drawn. The last five books tell of the retreat. From then on,



Xenophon is constantly in the foreground. The scene where he first reveals himself to the army, after the night of terror succeeding the massacre of the generals, is both touching and simple in its description of the manner in which he revives their courage. The terrible marches through the snow-covered mountains of Armenia, the sight of the sea, the return, are all dramatic events; and amid them, the discontent, the suspicions, the murmurs of revolt, are always controlled by his reasonable, persuasive speech. Minimise a little, possibly, his personal career, and the substance of the story still remains true. It is told with extreme charm; and that career, though somewhat idealized, offers considerable that is interesting in the way of psychological and military instruction.

His other great historical work is the *Hellenica*. We shall not speak of the *Agésilas*, as it is an oratorical eulogy, whose essential elements are taken from the *Hellenica* itself. His first object in writing the *Hellenica* was to continue Thucydides. In the first two books, he recounts the end of the Peloponnesian War; and his work, though lacking the profound vigor of his model, is still very commendable. Then he undertook to recount the events succeeding the Peloponnesian War; and so, little by little, arrived at the battle of Mantinea in 362. The second part, probably written in different periods of his life, loses more and more the objective clearness of the early books. As he departs farther from Thucydides, he allows his history to become more and more dominated by moralizing tendencies, till it becomes a moral and political sermon, with little care for chronology, exact sequence of events, relative importance of men and things, or the impartiality indispensable in the historian. He has only eulogies for Sparta. He detests Thebes and Epaminondas, scarcely naming the latter. The *Hellenica* has everywhere pleasing pages, yet the decline in the last books is undeniable. In fact, it must not be judged as a single work: the first two books, which are excellent, must be set apart; and in the rest, one must recognize that the author's old age becomes more and more evident.

**6. Conclusion. The *Cyropædia*.**—If the question were asked in which work of Xenophon he shows his character most completely, in which one the phases of his complex genius are combined and represented in the most exact manner, we should need to name, probably, the *Cyropædia*. Other works of his may be more perfect; but none show better what he was as a whole, with his fondness for military life, his political views, his passion for talking, story-telling, moralizing, and his concealed vein of sentimental, romantic imagination. It was a strange error on the part of Rollin to take the *Cyropædia* for sober history: this pretended history is a sort of

*Télémaque.* The author begins with Cyrus at his birth, and tells of his education, an ideal education whose consequences appear in his whole life. He became an excellent general, then a perfect sovereign. We need not discuss again the political and military views that underlie the work. Let us notice only, as pleasing passages, of great interest for the comprehension of the author as a writer of romance, the scenes of the first book in which he presents Cyrus as a child; and the celebrated farewell of Abradatas and Panthea in the sixth.<sup>1</sup> Here Xenophon imitates Homer: he wished to rewrite in his own way the parting of Hector and Andromache. At the same time, he wished to add to a touching beauty of natural sentiments the moral grandeur of honor, conceived in the manner of Sparta and of philosophy. Andromache pleads with her husband that he should not perish; Panthea exhorts hers to do his duty, though they should suffer in consequence. The idea is really pretty and eloquently expressed. Yet in the mouth of Panthea, the eloquence is faulty in reproducing too closely the speech—always reasonable, clear, cold—of the excellent moralizer who wrote the work.

**7. Plato: his Life and Career.**—Plato is not only the greatest pupil of Socrates, but a master of art and thought for all time. As a philosopher, he is the real founder of idealism. As a writer, he is, with Demosthenes, though by the possession of different qualities, the cleverest artist in Greek prose, and so one of the first prose writers of all ages.<sup>2</sup>

He was born at Athens, probably in 428, of a purely noble family, which claimed descent from King Codrus. He received an unusually broad education; besides gymnastics and music, he studied painting. From the first, he believed himself to have a taste for poetry, and composed dithyrambs, lyric poems, and tragedies. At the same time, he sought a higher scientific culture at the hands

<sup>1</sup> *Cyrop.* VI. 4.

<sup>2</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Complete editions; Stallbaum, 10 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, with prolegomena and commentaries in Latin, often republished from 1837 to 1877; Hirtzig-Schneider, Didot; Hermann-Wohlrab, Teubner; M. Schanz, Leipsic, Tauchnitz, 1875, and years following, important in textual criticism. Editions of the *Republic* by Jowett and Campbell, Oxford, 1894; of the *Phædo* by Couvreur, Paris, 1893. Selected dialogues by Kron-Deuschle, Leipsic, Teubner, 3 vols., 1881-1893. Excellent English translation with introductions and summary by B. Jowett, London, Macmillan, 1892. Excellent French translation by V. Cousin; others by Chauvet and Saisset. German translation by Müller, Leipsic, Brockhaus, 1850-1866.

Consult: Chaignet, *La Vie et les écrits de Platon*, Paris, 1871; Grote, *Plato and the Other Companions of Socrates*, London, 1885; Ch. Huit, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Platon*, Paris, 1893; A. Fouillée, *La Philosophie de Platon*, Paris, 2d ed., 1888; Bosanquet, *A Companion to Plato's Republic*, New York, 1895; Hermann, *Geschichte und System der platonischen Philosophie*, Heidelberg, 1839; Susemihl, *Die genetische Entwicklung der platonischen Philosophie*, Leipsic, 1855.

of the philosopher Cratylus, a pupil of Heraclitus. At the age of twenty he met Socrates, to whom he devoted himself thereafter without reserve. The first meeting must have taken place about 408, so that he had eight or nine years in which to enjoy the friendship of that remarkable conversationalist. Probably he gave Socrates the greater part of his time during the period. Political life did not attract him. Diogenes Laertius says that his voice was feeble; so he lacked the prime physical quality of an orator. His idealistic mind, moreover, was little fitted for the contingencies and occasional grossness of practical life. At the moment of Socrates's death, Plato was sick and could not be present to witness the scene.<sup>1</sup> Residence in Athens was becoming intolerable, if not dangerous, for all the disciples of Socrates, and they dispersed. Plato went first to Megara, to join Euclid; then, for ten or twelve years, he went on extensive journeys, visiting Cyrene, Italy, and Egypt. The influence of travel on his thought was considerable. At Cyrene, he met the mathematician Theodorus, whom he introduces in the *Theætetus*; in Italy, the Pythagoreans, Philolaus, Archytas, and Timæus; in Egypt, he came in contact with the mystery of a very old religious civilization. Socrates, content with Athens, did not even have the desire for such travels; Plato found in them some of the essential elements that he was to introduce into his philosophy. When about forty years of age, he was called to Sicily for the first time by Dionysius the Elder, tyrant of Syracuse, at the instigation of the monarch's brother-in-law Dio. The honest Dio, a friend of the Pythagoreans of Magna Græcia, had thought that Plato would inspire amiable virtue in the tyrant. But the experiment ended in a quarrel.<sup>2</sup> Plato returned to Athens and began to teach in the gymnasium of the Academy. Socrates used to converse everywhere, with chance persons whom he met in his walks. Plato habitually met his disciples and friends every day in the same place; philosophic instruction was beginning to be organized. The Academy was, however, rather a reunion of friends than strictly a school. The pupils conversed and discussed very freely with the master. Philosophic banquets of sage frugality from time to time offered both master and pupils the occasion for scenes like those in the *Symposium*.<sup>3</sup> Disciples came in great numbers. Plato's instruction seems to have been interrupted during the last forty years of his life only by two other voyages to Sicily, in 367 and 361. Dio-

<sup>1</sup> *Phædo*, p. 59 B.

<sup>2</sup> The legend tells that Plato was even sold as a slave, and regained his freedom through the intervention of a Cyrenean, who bought him and set him free.

<sup>3</sup> *Athænetus*, X, p. 419 C-D.

nysius the Younger had succeeded Dionysius the Elder in 368; Dio, always full of good intentions, could not be content with his previous failure; the second and third attempts did not succeed better than the first. Plato died in 347. He was never married. His property devolved upon his nephew and pupil, Speusippus, who, in turn, bequeathed this fortune to his own disciples, and thus made the residence of Plato the permanent home of the school.

The Platonic collection includes forty-two dialogues, thirteen letters, and some detached definitions. We shall not speak of the definitions, as they are mere uninteresting compilations of the school; nor of the letters, many of which are insignificant, and none authentic. Of the dialogues, a dozen were rejected by the ancient critics, or at least suspected of being apocryphal. Some modern scholars have attempted to add to the list of the suspected dialogues; there is nothing more arbitrary, in general, than such proscriptions. One may say briefly that some thirty dialogues, the most important ones in every respect, are authentic beyond question, as is attested by citations or allusions of Aristotle, or by the intrinsic character of their thought and style. Plato is therefore perfectly well known. He is one of a very small number of Greek writers whose works all seem to have been preserved, since the close of antiquity.

It would be very interesting if we could establish the chronological order of the dialogues, as this would permit us to follow the development of Plato's thought. In default of external evidence, which is rare, various means have been tried for constituting this chronology. Men have depended upon allusions to contemporary events, upon the degree of development of the various philosophic theories, upon the references of one dialogue to another, and upon the character of the style. For many reasons these processes are insufficient and give only vague results. The only thing absolutely certain is that the *Laws* was his last work, left in a state of roughness, and published by one of his disciples.<sup>1</sup> About the other dialogues it is best not to be too positive. Whatever their order, the essential features of his doctrine seem evident even in his earliest writings, immediately after he finished his travels; and his art, despite minor variations, has on the whole, a well-fixed character.

**8. Platonic Doctrine.** — It is not our plan to present a complete picture of Plato's philosophy, nor even to give a summary suitable for the use of specialists in philosophy. It is simply the literature in which we are concerned; and philosophic theories are part of the literature only as they bring to the multitude of "honest folk" new

<sup>1</sup> Diog. Laer. III, 37.



general ways of thinking and new intellectual and moral tendencies. From this point of view, however, the work of Plato was so considerable that one must attempt to define it at least briefly.

As a philosopher, Plato continues Socrates and yet surpasses him in every sense. He retains the dialectic method of his master and his religious and moral teaching. But he adds a complete metaphysics, in which elements borrowed from Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and the geometricians combine with the creations of his own genius to form a bold, splendid product. Like Socrates, he analyzes and defines dialectically the notions that the human mind has existing within it — beauty, courage, pleasure, justice. Like Socrates again, he believes in final causes and a Providence. But there is a difference. For Socrates, the general idea, which is the object of science, is only a conception of the mind; for Plato, another problem, wholly metaphysical, arises at once. To what external, objective reality does the conception in the mind correspond? He replies without hesitating: the general idea conceived by the mind has an independent, absolute existence; it is a being by itself, without which knowledge, which is purely subjective, would be unstable and groundless. The essential principle of Platonism, that which gives it its proper character and binds all its parts together, is the theory of Ideas. The world of Ideas is alone real. What the vulgar call reality is only the sensible image of the eternal Ideas. These, moreover, are of different degrees of inclusiveness as they are more or less general. The supreme Idea, which embraces all the others, the source of all existence and all knowledge, is the Idea of Good.

Science consists in knowing the Ideas, which are revealed to pure reason when freed from illusions of sense. These illusions give the vulgar only opinions (*δόξαι*), variable and uncertain as the sensible objects which produce them. Reason alone, rising by dialectic to the realm of Ideas, constructs knowledge (*ἐπιστήμη*), which is the possession of a solid, demonstrable verity. Dialectic progress (*πορεία διαλεκτική*) leads the mind by degrees from humble, sensible appearance to the corresponding Idea, then on to a higher one, and so on to the supreme Idea, which is the Idea of Good. Aside from dialectic, there is, strictly speaking, no knowledge whatever.

But does this mean that dialectic suffices for everything? No. Plato seems to believe, like Socrates, that the gods have reserved for themselves certain facts of knowledge; and like Socrates, he admits that they can communicate certain things to man by an inspiration. Prophetic trance may be a source of truth. Plato has too vivid an imagination not to be fond of dreams, of the free fancy of the soul trying by poetic hypotheses to pass the limits of

rigid science. He loves myths for their beauty and for the flicker of light they shed, perhaps, on the unknowable. He proclaims at times that he believes them. But if he is pleased by them, he is not duped; he knows well and says plainly that the beautiful myths which enchant him have never been proved true; that faith is not knowledge; and that, even though one should believe them true, one is not warranted in affirming that they are so.

The organization of the world by the Creator, the creation of inferior divinities, of souls and bodies, of men and animals, after the pattern of the Ideas, and by the mediation of numbers, all this marvellous cosmogony of the *Timæus* belongs to the domain of myth, not that of science proper. Plato had tried to give, in the *Phædo*, a dialectic proof of the immortality of the soul; he admits also, by positive reasoning, its preëxistence; but as to the ulterior condition of this immortal soul, he has only credence and hypothesis. And his conception is of a very marked popular character. The Hell of the Middle Ages is met with already in Plato.

The domain of dialectic, for Plato as for Socrates, is really politics and morals, the practical science of human life. Natural sciences interest him but little. He almost ignores Democritus, his contemporary. As a true Athenian he attaches himself before all else to man living in society. It is interesting to note with what logical power he applies his political and moral conceptions to this system as a whole. Here again, pure reason is to dominate. In practical life, as in science, one must be governed by Ideas. There is no real art except as there is a corresponding science; and as science is only the knowledge of pure Ideas, it is always in the end dialectic to which one must return. Politics and morals are closely allied; the same principle governs both. The city is a collective being analogous to the individual, but more complex and greater. These two kinds of beings have the same needs and are subject to the same laws. The human soul is like a chariot drawn by two horses and directed by a driver.<sup>1</sup> The driver is reason (*νοῦς*), who sees the route and directs the blind impulses of the horses (*θυμός* and *ἐπιθυμία*), that is, the noble and the base passions. The city, like the individual, needs government, nourishment, and defence. To these three needs correspond respectively, intelligence, the lower passions of *ἐπιθυμία*, and the noble passions of *θυμός*. The whole art of politics and morals consists in establishing in this complex organism the harmonious unity that results from a proper hierarchy of the different elements, so that each does what it is fitted to do (*τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν*), without usurping the functions of the others. It

<sup>1</sup> *Phædrus*, p. 246 B.

is this judicious harmony which really constitutes justice in the state and in the individual. How can it be made dominant?

In the perfect republic, the three essential functions will be assigned to three distinct classes: the workmen, including artisans, laborers, and merchants, who are to see to the material welfare of the state; the guardians, who are to defend it; and the magistrates, who are to govern. Guardians and magistrates are appointed by careful selection and prepared by special education for their functions. There is no distinction, in this respect, between sexes; men and women have the same aptitudes and can perform the same functions, if their preparation be identical. The objection due to personal and family interests, which might destroy the unity of the state, Plato avoids by suppressing, in the two upper classes, who alone have part in government, first their personal interests, by means of common property rights, and then their family interests, by means of a community of women and children. The children belong to no family and are brought up by the state for the state. The throng of warriors needs only true opinions. A serious music, which shall accustom the soul to rhythm, and a moderate gymnastic exercise, which shall make the body supple and well disciplined, constitute all that they need. Science is reserved for the future magistrates, who are to be philosophers. Music and mathematics will gradually free them from illusions of sense. Dialectic will give them access to the realm of Ideas. Homer and the poets, the imitators of sensible reality, who have only false and impious ideas about the gods, are to be banished from the republic.<sup>1</sup>

In the individual as in the city, each of the component elements must have its proper functions and be made to perform them. This is the object of personal morals. The virtuous soul is that in which reason commands and the passions obey. It is prudent, courageous, temperate; and the equilibrium of these virtues results in justice. It is happy as well as just. Happiness, in the eyes of Plato and Socrates, is the natural aim of life; but it cannot be attained without virtue. The vicious soul, though possessing all sensible goods, is sick and thoroughly unhappy; it can return to happiness only by being healed, and this is the work of expiation. The criminal is a fool. If he does not make expiation voluntarily during life, he shall be forced to do so after death.

All these views are profound, ingenious, often sublime, sometimes paradoxical, and show a magnificent consistency. That there are in this bold fabrication purely verbal excesses of reasoning and abuses of dialectic that compromise its solidity, we need neither deny nor

<sup>1</sup> *Rep.* X, particularly pp. 606 ff.

demonstrate in detail. Yet it remains true that his philosophy can enchant both the heart and the reason. To admire and enjoy the philosophy of Plato, it is not necessary to accept literally the theory of the Ideas. It is enough to believe, with Plato, that the realm of sensation is inferior, and that the glance of the soul must be directed higher. There is Platonism in all who love the ideal, pure reason, duty, good morals, more than selfishness and pleasure; and who mingle a dreamy element with their ideal.

**9. The Art of Dialogue in Plato.** — Plato had at his service as a philosopher the genius of a writer who had no need to fear comparison; and so his dialogues were finished works of art. Yet one must not fall into confusion; if one expects never to find in them anything but easy and perfectly agreeable reading, one will be deceived. He does not aim essentially to please: he aims to instruct. Every time that dialectic seems necessary for reaching his goal, he uses it with all the rigor, all the minutiae, all the baldness, which, however repulsive to the uninitiated, the form of discussion demands. Certain dialogues, such as the *Parmenides* or the *Philebus*, are of continuous subtlety, and discourage the ordinary reader. Others, on the contrary, like the *Protagoras*, are charming and easy to read, because dialectic has little place in them. In most of them there are, indeed, difficult passages side by side with others that are easy. But it remains true that, almost in spite of Plato, art has everywhere as much place as science in his works, and certain pages of the dialogues are among the most beautiful that have ever been written. He seeks before all else, by way of method rather than art, to imitate the dialectic conversation of Socrates, the investigation of truth by questions and answers. But as he is a clever artist, the conversation, although purely methodical in principle, becomes animated and realistic. It is not in vain that he has read Homer, Pindar, Sophocles, Aristophanes, and the mimes of Sophron; nor yet that he is Plato. As his philosophy is an original synthesis of the earlier philosophies, so his art summarizes and unites all the riches of Greek art. Dialectic, under the enchantment of his hand, becomes dramatic and often lyric: comedy enters in, much surprised to find itself philosophic, moral, religious. The dialogue as he used it is a new literary type, whatever the writings of his predecessors, Alexamenos of Teos and Zeno of Elea, may have been. From the day when he wrote his first works, a new form of literary beauty was revealed.

**10. The Personages and the Characters.** — Generally, in the philosophic or literary dialogues of all time, the interlocutors lack life. They are abstract ideas, theses opposed to each other, instead of men at strife. In Plato, the personages are both numerous and true to



life. He shows us a new phase of life at Athens, and one of the most amusing, that of the disputers, those philosophic prattlers who are never quiet: first Socrates, who, from morning till night, never leaves the gymnasium, the promenades, the agora, the rendez-vous where he is sure to find interlocutors; then sophists, whose business it is to be constantly engaged in disputation; and finally young men, eager for novelties; with others who come by chance—a rhapsodist, a statesman, a priest—Greeks, one and all, all ready to talk. The active and interesting little world is portrayed with striking truth.

Among his adversaries, we have not only Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, and Hippias, with their theories, revealed by Plato; but the individual features of each one, the shade of his character, his language, all emphasized by the external aspect of the personage. The *Protagoras* is admirable in this respect. The great professors of discourse are brought together in the house of Callias. Protagoras, king of the sophists, is surrounded by a retinue of respectful disciples, while he himself paces up and down the courtyard; Hippias of Elis sits on a lofty seat, surrounded by his disciples, who sit on lower benches. Prodicus of Ceos, delicate, shivering, half reclining in the little chamber prepared for him, speaks with a loud, bass voice, dominating the conversations for a long distance away. When the discussion begins, each one brings to it his characteristic processes,—Protagoras, his pretty narratives and easy eloquence; Prodicus, his subtle distinctions; and Hippias, his sonorous, hollow periods. There is the same truthfulness in the *Gorgias*, where the three portraits of Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles are clearly distinct. Gorgias is a fine speaker, and despite his theoretic scepticism, he adheres to convention without pursuing his theories to their legitimate results. Polus, a younger man, is bolder, and above all more imprudent; but it is the boldness of the school, so to speak, the reeling of dialectic, which recoils before unexpected applications. Callicles is a practical politician, and disdainful, at bottom, of philosophy, which he considers good enough for young men. Bold, cynical, witty, not in the least pedantic, a sort of Alcibiades or Critias, he draws conclusions that make his masters hesitate: he represents the active generation educated in sophistry. One might prolong the list indefinitely: there is not a sophist in the dialogues who is not original and true to life. They are all amusing, not merely affable. All might say, with the Alceste of Molière:—

“Good Heavens! Gentlemen, I did not mean to be the cause of so much mirth. . . .”

and this is the very reason why they are amusing. Plato's personages, like those of Molière, like the "Bon Père" of Pascal's *Provinciales*, are naïvely what they are. They think themselves very strong; they represent false knowledge, self-satisfied, ignorant of its ignorance. They betray themselves in attempting to show their worth; and when they perceive that they have been the tools of their adversary, their chagrin adds to their drollery. Yet the comedy is not overdone. Their ideas and arguments are not weakened by a malevolent enemy. Plato plays an open game, like Pascal, who makes the "Bon Père" cite the very texts of the Jesuit doctors; like Molière, who puts into the mouth of Oronte a sonnet that wins, at first, the applause of the audience. One might applaud the language which Plato attributes to Gorgias, to Protagoras, and even to Prodicus and Lysias. The discourses are not unreasonable, but things which the Athenians applauded every day.

Like the adversaries, the friends are varied, too, and vividly portrayed. Not to enumerate them all, it is easy to group them around three or four types that summarize or represent them. There is first what we might call the type "Phædrus": the young Athenian, sometimes almost an *ephebus*, pretty as an Olympian, insatiable in curiosity, fond of discourse, somewhat ashamed of his passions, and timid before Socrates, ready to blush, usually rich and of good family, seeking only disinterested culture. Hippocrates in the *Protagoras*, Lysis, Charmides, and others belong to this family. The type "Phædo" consists of intimate disciples, devoted even more to the good sense of Socrates than to his philosophy, men who have had a moral conversion, almost an action of grace, who live very near the heart of their master, faithful to his interests even in the hour of death. Such are, besides Phædo: Apollodorus, who sobs violently when his master drinks the hemlock; the affectionate Chærephon; Simmias and Cebes, so sensible, so ready in sympathy, with a sincere, unflagging zeal for the truth; and Crito, an old friend of childhood, who advises Socrates to escape from prison. Alcibiades, who is vividly portrayed in the *Symposium*, is unlike any other. In the centre of the various groups appears Socrates, a charming master—now the true Socrates, real and historic, with the figure of Silenus, characterized by penetrating irony, a firm spirit, and an active conscience; now Socrates idealized and transfigured, attracted and carried away in the boldest metaphysical discussions. It is still Socrates, and it is not. Sometimes he is even disguised under other names: he calls himself Diotimus or Parmenides. He might call himself Plato; for it is really the disciple, this time, that we hear speaking. Plato, unlike Aristotle and Cicero, never presents himself in his dialogues. He has chosen rather to mingle his

features with those of Socrates, leaving the reader the trouble and the pleasure of distinguishing the two.

**11. His Style.** — To the variety of personages corresponds the variety of the style. Plato is a dramatic poet; like Sophocles and Menander, he makes each character speak the language most suitable for its rôle.

Sometimes he pushes the imitation to the extent of exact copy. His imitations of the style of Gorgias<sup>1</sup> and Lysias<sup>2</sup> are celebrated. We have already noticed those of Prodicus and Hippias in the *Protagoras*. That of Protagoras is perhaps even more striking, because more delicate, the oratorical manner of the great sophist being less marked than that of the others. But these copies are only works of fancy, and do not really constitute the author's style. That appears in its true character only in the parts of the dialogue where he does not aim to imitate too directly such and such a mannerism of his adversaries.

When he writes in his own way, his style is a marvel of perfection, yet owes nothing to sophistic rhetoric, which aimed to excite the mind by vehemence of passions, to master it by specious, imperious reasoning, and to charm it by the sonority of words and sentences. Plato loved to have soul speak freely to soul, in a conversation made up of dialectic, as subtle and slow as should be necessary to define the Idea, and of occasional poetic divination. Dialectic needed to assume every tone from the most familiar to the most sublime; for if it rose to the supreme Idea of Good, it began as readily with the most trivial object of reality. It lived in reason and imagination; it excluded all violent or base passion. Plato speaks about things of eternity, seriously, simply, with a freedom of movement that passes from familiarity to enthusiasm. He soars like a great artist through all the regions of thought, with a steady, sure progress, with an undulating, easy movement, with a calm, intellectual serenity, that goes, without haste or difficulty, higher and higher toward the brilliance of the Idea.

His vocabulary is substantially the purest Attic, as one might expect. But it is not free from admixture; an element of poetic language is occasionally introduced. Yet there is no technical jargon, despite the novelty and difficulty of the subjects. Even the word to denote the Ideas (*εἶδος* or *ἰδέα*) is taken from current speech and not much altered from its usual meaning. It is well known how much this purity of taste was altered later in the language of philosophers. The musical, homogeneous periods of Isocrates, the powerful, striking phrases of Demosthenes, would be ill adapted to this lightly flowing

<sup>1</sup> The speech of Agatho in the *Symposium*, p. 194 E ff.    <sup>2</sup> In the *Phædrus*.

conversation. Plato's sentences are much diversified in form, now short, now long, always free and always flexible. They do not fear the slight mistakes in spoken language called by the grammarians *anacolutha*. Even when enthusiasm exalts and organizes them into long periods, their rhythm savors in no way of oratorical artifice. One thinks rather of the magnificent, tranquil lyric poems of Pindar than of the passionate fire of Demosthenes. Plato is graceful even in treating the sublime; but his grace is Attic, free from the naïve awkwardness and roughness of Herodotus. It is the grace of a young athlete, ready for all the struggles of the *palaestra*.

Many passages, whether in familiar conversation or in narrative, are of extreme simplicity. The commonest words suffice. He mentions the humbler trades by name, disregarding false dignity. The sentences are short, easy, lucid, mingled with proverbs, lighted with smiles, always fine and polished, like Attic conversation. Other passages are more ornate and of a more sustained tone and inspiration. Such are the charming poetic myths, the fine descriptions, and the more or less lengthy moral disquisitions. The style, though still simple, has a reflection of poesy due to the thought rather than the words. The tone is serious and smiling by turns. Citations from Homer, Pindar, Simonides, Euripides, and the comic poets are found side by side with conversation, coloring it and giving it relief. The description of the landscape at the beginning of the *Phædrus*, and the comparison of poetic inspiration with a lodestone in the *Ion* are justly celebrated examples of this semi-poetic manner. The *Apology*, almost as a whole, furnishes specimens of equal beauty, and that in serious discussion, tempered with ironical finesse and good nature. Other passages, in the loftiness of their metaphysical or moral thought, are the product of a still higher inspiration. Such are particularly those in which Plato depicts his vision of the supreme Idea, the beauty of the supra-sensible world. When he speaks of such matters, the author in him becomes an inspired writer and the dialectician a poet. Yet this very emotion is serene and sober. It expresses rather the delight of admiring contemplation than the vehemence of terrestrial passion. The style is still simple. The rhythm of the language is ample and pleasing. The sentences, whether short or not, pass easily along with an ample movement which carries them at a single sweep far toward the truth. It might be thought of as the stately flight of sacred birds mounting without haste to heaven. The eulogy of philosophic life in the *Theætetus*,<sup>1</sup> the pages of the *Republic* that deal with the supreme Idea,<sup>2</sup> the end of the discourse of Diotimus in the *Symposium*,<sup>3</sup> are admirable exam-

<sup>1</sup> *Theætetus*, p. 173 C ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Rep.*, p. 508 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Symp.*, p. 211 C ff.



ples of this type of beauty. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of every translation, let us present this last passage:—

“O my dear Socrates,” continued the stranger of Mantinea, “that which can give value to this life is the sight of the eternal beauty. As compared with such a vision, what are gold and ornaments and the beauty of youth? The sight of these excites you to-day, and their contemplation and enjoyment so charm you and others that you would consent, if it were possible, to forego meat and drink, if you might continually behold them and be in their presence. Yes, I ask, how intense would be the delight of a mortal who should be permitted to see face to face, in its incomparable image, the divine beauty? Think you that he would complain of his lot, who, getting a glimpse of such an object, might give himself over to its contemplation and enjoyment? And is it not in contemplating eternal beauty with the eye of reason, which alone can behold it, that he can fashion and produce, not merely images of virtue—since it is not to images that he devotes himself—but real, veritable virtues? For it is reality that he loves. To him who produces and nourishes real virtue it is given to be cherished of God. To him, more than to any other mortal, is it given to be immortal.”

**12. The Invention of the Dialogues.**—There is nothing more supple or complex than the invention of a dialogue of Plato; nothing more organic, beneath the capricious variations of the arabesques which at first present themselves. The body of the dialogue is made up of dialectical discussion, and this is generally inclosed between a prologue and a conclusion, and broken by apparent digressions and episodic myths.

The prologues give the place where the action occurs, with the personages and setting of the discussion. Plato does not always describe the place. In the *Gorgias*—that finished work of art—such a description is wanting. On the contrary, in the *Phædrus*, the *Protagoras*, the *Symposium*, and many other dialogues, the scenery is painted with extreme elegance. In fact, it is wonderfully suited to the action that is to be portrayed. The banks of the Ilissus, with the plane tree, the grove of the nymphs, and the chirping of grasshoppers, form an enviable setting for the vivid, spirited conversation about love, just as the noisy house of Callias is the natural centre of the realm of sophistry, and as the banqueting hall of the *Symposium* seems to call in advance for the follies of Aristophanes, the fantasy of Pausanias, and the semi-intoxication of Alcibiades. With or without scenery, Plato gives us, at the first, his personages. They are always chosen with an unerring instinct of propriety, which enables him to see without fail what intellectual or moral character in the interlocutor of Socrates will best suit the nature of the questions proposed. Then, even before the principal discussion,

it often happens that preliminary discussions take place, forming almost a supplement to the dialogue proper. Whither would Plato lead us? Has he forgotten his design? Nay, he is leading us toward the goal insensibly, while directing our thought to allied subjects, which may put us in good humor beforehand to enjoy fully, and understand better, the main subject.

✓ Then the principal discussion begins. Here again all is complex. Its elements are varied: first, dialectic proper, with its questions and answers as Socrates employed it, its sinuous progress, its apparent hesitations and backward turns, its inductions and deductions. Then come the processes of the opposition, logical discourses, myths, and commentaries on the poets. Finally, even in Socrates we find something that is not pure dialectic, but rather revery, fancy, poetic divination. This also is expressed in myths or conversations, and is interlaced and connected with infinite dexterity.

The conclusion is likewise presented under very diverse forms. Sometimes the conversation ends in a definition accepted by both interlocutors. It may happen that the discussion closes with a negative solution and the real solution of the problem is postponed to another dialogue. The conclusion may be in the form of a myth, or a poetic hypothesis, that adds plausibility to a dialectic solution thought to be insufficient.

Amid these complex elements, it is not always easy to comprehend the unity of a Platonic dialogue—its real literary or philosophical purport. More than one commentator has gone ridiculously astray in certain cases, both in ancient and in modern times. The task requires shrewdness and literary tact: the work of the Graces is not measurable by rule and compass. Let us avoid, in any case, attributing incoherence to Plato, when, beyond doubt, whatever fault there is belongs to us alone.

**13. Plato's Atticism.** — Montaigne had little relish for this fluctuating, sinuous art, which he esteemed rather tedious. He censured "those long, empty, preparatory interlocutions." Herein he showed himself a disciple of Roman, rather than of Attic, taste: he spoke as a disciple of Seneca. His reproach, however, is not wholly without foundation. Dialectic, like the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, has its unattractive features even in Plato. But, on the whole, Plato's work is a marvel of Atticism. His philosophic system itself, independent of the dress, is truly Attic, with its elegant clearness of outline and its combination of grace and sublimity; while the dress shows all the merits of the system in analogous ways. Never has philosophy, that "sacred music of thinking minds," as Renan calls it, spoken a more musical or a sublimer language. The delightful

speakers of the dialogues seem to move in a purer atmosphere than ours, a philosophic ether where the heaviness and roughness of our thought is unknown, where language is pure harmony.

Plato's part in the history of thought and art in Greece can scarcely be compared to any but that of Homer. The Homeric epic, unconscious interpreter of popular thought, had deified the instinctive life of the people by a process analogous to anthropomorphism. By regular evolution all Greek civilization was developed from that life. In the fifth century the antique structure began threatening to fall. Plato, after Socrates, undertook to build a dwelling for Greek thought; and, though he could not have foreseen it, the dwelling, still thoroughly Attic in its architectural elements, was to become the residence of thought not yet conceived of, that of part of the thought of the future world. By his preference for practical and social morals and his instinct for beauty, he showed himself really Athenian. But by his transcendent idealism and his aspiration for the absolute and supra-sensible, he prepared the way early for Christianity. We must, of course, not confound his lofty intellectuality with the religion of the heart, that of charity and submissive, humble faith. And yet certain words in both systems sound alike; and one can see how he was able at times to produce, from a distance, almost the impression of a Christian Father. We must admit, at least, if we mean to be true and exact, that this Greek, Athenian, incomparable artist, certainly is, as has been so well said, one of the founders of the "City of God."<sup>1</sup>

**14. The Academy after Plato.** — The disciples of Plato held their reunions in his house even after his death. It was situated in the gardens of Academus. We have seen that it became the property of his nephew Speusippus, who bequeathed it in turn to his successors. The "Academy" was an organized school, which chose its head or "scholarch." Speusippus was the first, then came Xenocrates, Polemo, and Crates. They were masters of the "Old Academy" as opposed to the "Middle" and the "New Academy" which we shall meet in another chapter. Neither in the history of philosophy nor in that of literature does the Old Academy hold a considerable place. As philosophers, the successors of Plato followed his inspiration, though gradually abandoning certain parts of his doctrine and making loans from the neighboring schools, particularly that of Aristotle. As writers, they show more elegance than genius. Their works, however, have almost wholly perished.<sup>2</sup> Speusippus was the pupil

<sup>1</sup> E. Havet, *Origines du Christianisme*, vol. I, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* III; Meineke, *Fragm. Com. Græc.*; and Kock, *Fragm. Com. Atticorum*.

of Isocrates before being the pupil of Plato. He wrote chiefly dialogues. Some few fragments give us the impression of a rather graceful facility. He replaced the Platonic definition by description, and substituted for the Ideas, which were infinite in number, the ten fundamental ideas of Pythagoras, which are only categories (finite and infinite, equal and unequal, etc.). Xenocrates no longer wrote dialogues, but composed treatises after the fashion of Aristotle, and poems. The influence of Pythagoras is manifest in his fragments, which are, moreover, very short. Polemo and Crates, of whom we cannot say that they wrote anything, seem to have been chiefly preachers of morals. Such is also the character of Crantor, the pupil of Polemo, who composed numerous writings in prose and verse. His treatise *On Mourning* (Περὶ πένθους) was a sort of consolation or exhortation which became very celebrated; *aureolus et ad verbum ediscendus libellus*,<sup>1</sup> said Cicero. Horace cites Crantor by the side of the Stoic Chrysippus, as a recognized master in morals. His fragments show, like those of Speusippus, ingenious combination of the rhetoric of Isocrates with the philosophy of Plato. It is all, indeed, rather tame. The real successor of Plato, his only rival, was an independent disciple who was perhaps even somewhat heretical, namely, Aristotle.

**15. Aristotle: his Life; Immensity of his Work.**<sup>2</sup>—Aristotle was born in 384 at Stagira, a colony of Andros and Chalcis, situated on the coast of Macedon. His father, Nicomachus, was physician to Amyntas II of Macedon. In 367, at the age of seventeen, Aristotle

<sup>1</sup> ["A golden book, to be learned by heart." — Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Complete editions; The Berlin Academy (Bekker, Brandis, V. Rose, Bonitz); 5 vols., 1831-1870; the Didot edition (Dübner, Büssemaker, Heitz), Paris, 1848-1874. The principal works are in the Teubner Collection (*Politics* and *Ethics*, by Sussemühl; *Rhetoric*, by Römer; *Poetics*, by Christ, etc.); *Poetics*, by Vahlen, 3d ed., Leipsic, 1885; by Hatzfeld and Dufour, Paris, 1899; *De Anima*, with French translation by Rodier, 2 vols., Paris, 1900, with a scholarly commentary; *Constitution of Athens*, first published, from the papyrus, by Kenyon, London, 1891; later editions by Kaibel and Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, Berlin, 1891; and by F. Blass, Teubner, 1892; by Van Herwerden and Leeuwen, Lyons, 1891; and by Sandys, London, 1893. The *Ethics*, text ed., by Bywater, Oxford, 1890. The *Politics*, edited by Newman, with essays, 4 vols., Oxford, 1902.

French translation of the complete works by Barthélemy-St.-Hilaire, Paris, 1837-1862, except the *Constitution of Athens*, which is translated by Th. Reinach, Paris, 1891; and by Haussoulier, *Bibl. de l'École des Hautes Etudes*, fasc. 991. English translation of the *Politics*, with introductions, etc., by Jowett, 2 vols., Oxford, 1885; of the *Poetics* in Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, London, 1895; edition with translation by Butcher, London, 1898; *Constitution of Athens*, translated by Poste, London, 1891; *Rhetoric*, translated by Welldon, London, 1886; *Ethics*, by Welldon, London, 1892; by Robert Williams, London, 1869; and by Hatch, London, 1879; *On the Parts of Animals*, Ogle, London, 1882.

Consult: *Aristotle*, by George Grote, 2 vols., London, 1872; *Aristotle*, by Davidson, New York, Scribners, 1896.



came to Athens to complete his education. From his father he had inherited an independent fortune. He doubtless followed first the instruction of Isocrates. Plato was then in Sicily, and did not return till 365. As soon as he returned, Aristotle became attached to him, and was his disciple for eighteen years, till Plato's death in 347. Notwithstanding the independence of his thought, his admiration for his master was keen and even fervent. He spoke concerning the deceased philosopher, in an elegy of which we have a few verses, with a warmth of sentiment amounting to enthusiasm; and several passages of his writings express, despite the difference of their theories, the fidelity of his attachment to the man and the constancy of his admiration for the thinker. There is a well-known saying, often cited under this form, "*Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.*"<sup>1</sup> It is a translation from a phrase in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>2</sup> Plato, it is said, called him the "reader" (*ἀναγνώστης*) and "mind" (*νοῦς*); the two words well indicate his penetrating, studious activity.

From 347 to 342 the life of Aristotle was spent partly in a residence with his friend Hermias, tyrant of Atarneus, to whose memory he dedicated a famous scolion, and partly in various travels.

In 342 Philip remembered the son of Nicomachus, the former physician of his father, and intrusted to him the education of Alexander, then fourteen years of age. Aristotle remained in Macedon till the departure of Alexander for Asia in 335. The fondness of Alexander for Homer, and his eagerness to learn science, are the well-known fruits of Aristotle's education. For ten years Aristotle enjoyed this royal friendship, and it brought him valuable assistance in prosecuting his scientific researches, such as rare animals and considerable sums of money. The relation was broken off in 325 by the murder of Callisthenes, Aristotle's nephew. After the year 335 Aristotle made his residence for thirteen years in Athens. It was there that he founded his school—the "Peripatetic," or the "Lyceum," named after the promenades (*περίπατοι*) of the Lyceum, where he was accustomed to join his disciples.

After the death of Alexander, Aristotle was obliged to quit Athens, for a violent reaction against Macedon had put his life in jeopardy there. Threatened with an accusation of impiety, he retired to Chalcis in 323, where he died of disease the year after. The same year saw the death of his contemporary, Demosthenes, who likewise was born in 384. The two lives, though so different in many ways, continued parallel with each other to the very end.

Aristotle published a large number of works, and left a large

<sup>1</sup> "A friend is Plato, but the Truth is more." — Tr.]      <sup>2</sup> *Nic. Eth.* I. 4.

number of unpublished writings, which became the property of his disciple, Theophrastus, and were not published till much later. Strabo<sup>1</sup> tells us that these papers of Theophrastus became the property of Neleus of Scepsis, then were neglected by the latter's heirs, and bought, in the second century, by Apellicon of Teos, who had them copied and deposited at Athens. Sulla, after the capture of Athens in 78, sent them to Rome, where the grammarian Tyrannio, and afterward the philosopher Andronicus of Rhodes, published them. The works which Aristotle published in his lifetime were not of the same sort as the others. The others were esoteric or acroamatic — reserved entirely for disciples, who attended the lectures (*ἀκροάματα*) of the master. Those published in his lifetime included works of various sorts which were not entirely philosophic. There were poems and discourses; numerous works of erudition; and finally dialogues, of which philosophy was the subject, but in which the master's teaching was presented to the public in an exoteric or popular form, without having all the rigor of treatment necessary for true science.

We cannot enumerate here all the works extant in antiquity under his name. Diogenes Laertius fixes the number not far from four hundred, without including, he says, a multitude of apocryphal writings and apothegms. Nor can we cite all that we still possess or of which we have fragments. The works that are almost intact number forty-seven, and a hundred others are more or less well known from fragments. We must be content with a glance over the body of this production. Its character cannot be well understood unless one considers it from the point of view of the author's philosophical principles. The first thing necessary, then, is to summarize that philosophy.

**16. Principles of Aristotle's Philosophy.** — Like Plato, Aristotle makes science consist in a knowledge of the essence (*οὐσία*) of things. Like Plato, too, he thinks that this essence must be sought in the general idea which binds similar things together; there is no science of the particular, but only of the general. But whereas Plato gave to the Idea a real existence distinct from that of things, Aristotle believed that the idea exists only in and through the things themselves, and can be discovered only in the real world. Again, whereas Plato subordinates all the Ideas to the Supreme Idea of Good and is gradually absorbed in the contemplation of this essence, Aristotle believes in the independence of the essences, and does not reduce them all to one unique principle. They must be studied in and for themselves — not for the sake of the Idea of

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, XIII, 54; cf. Plut., *Sulla*, 26.

Good, but to understand their specific differences. To know a thing is to discern its first elements, its principles, and its causes. The principles of a thing are its essence, its quantity, its quality, and its different relations with other objects. These are so many predicates or categories, which he enumerates. He makes them ten in number. But true knowledge is knowledge of the essence—that is, of what causes an object to be itself and not some other. The essence of an object can be analyzed into four elements which determine it and are its causes: (1) the matter (ὑλη) of which it is composed; (2) the form (εἶδος) which the matter has taken; (3) the force (τὸ κινεῖν) which has wrought the transformation; and (4) the end (τὸ τέλος) realized thereby. It is the concurrence of the four causes which makes matter pass from potentiality to realization. Hence, it is their concurrence which one must know to possess the total knowledge of the object. But for this dialectic will not suffice. Dialectic, starting with the assent of the interlocutor, does not go back to real principles; it accepts opinions in their stead and it can produce only a probable certitude. It has its worth as mental gymnastics, and is even useful in subjects which spring from opinion rather than from science proper. But true science, which is complete and firm, cannot be content with this. Scientific definition, which summarizes the essence of a thing, and demonstration, which deduces from the definition its consequences, must be based on a complete and a methodical observation of the facts themselves, and of all the facts.

Since fact is the basis of all science, Aristotle seeks it in all sources of information. He observes, he listens; he is prodigiously erudite, an indefatigable collector of facts of every sort. Physics, politics, morals, literature—all are material for science. By virtue of these very principles, his science must be encyclopædic.

On such a foundation of fact he builds theories. He seeks to determine from his observations the nature of all that exists. He constructs a physics, or theory of the conditions of sensible being; a theory of the heavens; one of plants; one of animals; one of the soul; one of the gods; one of politics and morals; and one each of rhetoric, poetics, logic, and dialectic.

**17. General View of his Works. Summary Classification.**—Hence the immense number and infinite diversity of his works, which bear upon all parts of his system. Aside from the poems, discourses, and *Letters*, which are not philosophic, we have three groups of writings, essentially different, yet all embraced by his vast conception of science: (1) the dialogues, in which, using a Platonic method, he expounds according to his own doctrines, if not the well-founded

truth that he aspires to constitute, at least plausibility regarding the philosophic subjects that interest most men; (2) works of erudition, designed to collect the materials of his theoretic speculation; (3) treatises (*πραγματεῖαι*), in which he constructs real science for himself and his disciples.

Of the dialogues, we have only fragments, though some of them are fairly long. We know the titles of fourteen. The principal ones were a dialogue *On Philosophy*, in three books, a sort of Aristotelian *Timæus*; the *Eudemus*, on the soul, like the *Phædo*; the dialogue *On Justice* — “in four large books,” says Cicero; the dialogue *On Nobility*, of which we have a few excellent pages; the *Nerinthus*, so named from a Corinthian laborer who, having read the *Gorgias*, became a philosopher; the *Gryllus*, which got its title from the son of Xenophon, and was devoted to rhetoric; and the dialogue *On the Poets*, in three books.

Of the works of erudition, only one is extant to-day as a whole, the recently discovered treatise on the *Constitution of Athens*, which is on Egyptian papyrus, and has two parts: first the history of the political transformation of Athens; then an account of contemporary institutions. The latter is much mutilated, but the former is almost intact. It contains, in a neat, pleasing summary, the description of a phase of Athenian history much neglected by the ordinary historians, who were interested more in battles than in institutions. The treatise was often mentioned by the ancients. It was part of a collection of analogous treatises, a real “library,” in which Aristotle studied the constitutions of one hundred and fifty-eight Greek and barbarian cities. It is needless to say that such a collection, while necessitating immense research on the part of one man, calls for the collaboration of numerous others. We cannot regard Aristotle as having done the whole of this work alone. In this group of works of erudition, let us note yet the *Pythic Victors*; the *Didascalia*, real “Annals of the Theatre,” giving the list of representations at Athens from the beginning, with the titles of the plays, the names of authors and choregi, the awards of prizes, etc.; the collection of *Oratorical Treatises*, in which Aristotle condensed the substance of earlier rhetorical works so neatly that, according to Cicero, no one read them any more except in his summary. Other productions of the same kind were attributed to Aristotle, such as the *Homeric Questions*, the *Problems*, and the *Peplos* (a collection of various mythological facts, so named from the embroidery covering the veil of Athene). It is probable that the original idea of these works goes back to Aristotle, yet certain that the collection became more and more numerous and gradually lost its authenticity.



The acroamatic works form to-day almost all that is preserved of his writings. They have been rescued from oblivion by the respect which so many centuries have paid to the philosophic thought of their author, and have lived on through the ages, notwithstanding the very imperfect form that in many cases they received; for it must be repeated that these works were not published by Aristotle. According to all appearances, they were not designed for immediate publication. They were private notes, notes of courses, more or less revised, sometimes existing in nearly finished form, but sometimes, too, more imperfect, with lacunæ, repetitions, obscurities of every sort, which must have imposed on their first editors an extremely delicate task. There is no doubt that, if the stamp of Aristotle has left its impress everywhere on the form and the substance, yet there are also alterations of every sort, such as must have resulted from the circumstances of their publication. Lacunæ were arbitrarily filled; dittography and amalgamations of passages belonging to distinct works are found, not to speak of petty faults in copying, and the later introduction of apocryphal treatises. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the collection is solid and imposing. Not to enumerate all the writings that compose this, it will suffice to mention the chief ones. Among works relative to the "contemplative" or "theoretical" part of science, we have *Metaphysics*, *Physics*, *Psychology*, *Natural History*, the *Generation of Animals*, etc.; then come others relative to the "practical" part of science—the *Politics*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Organon* (a group of writings on Logic, the tool of all research, subdivided into the *Categories*, *On Expression*, *Analytics*, and *Topics*), the *Refutation of the Sophists*, the *Rhetoric*, and the *Poetics*.

**18. Some Theories of Aristotle.**—We need not set forth in detail Aristotle's views on the physical universe and on natural history. As a scholar, he need not be considered in the history of letters. Suffice it to establish, first, his immense knowledge, though it was faulty, owing to many errors then inevitable; next, the power of philosophic insight with which he spoke, illuminating the chaos of facts with the light of systematic explanations. His attempt to classify facts is admirable and often happy. His effort to explain them by the four fundamental causes is an immense task, in which he displays a subtle ingenuity. This, it must be confessed, is generally in vain, because the problem was not accurately stated, and indeed could scarcely be so stated then. In his time an admirable physicist and naturalist, though necessarily incomplete and adventurous, he is to-day a great master in the domain of science and of strictly humanitarian speculation. We shall not discuss his logic,

though it was almost perfect, because it is too technical for a history of literature. It is only of the metaphysician, the politician, the moralist, the literary theorist, that we must speak.

There is soul, according to Aristotle, in all that lives, in every being that feeds, grows, and perishes by virtue of having force of its own. Man, the animals, even the plants, have a soul, since they have an internal principle of life and growth. But, just as there are many sorts of living beings, so there are many sorts of souls. Plants have only a nutritive soul; animals have a sensitive soul; man alone has a reasoning soul. The soul, inasmuch as it is the "form" of that "matter" called the body, is inseparable from it and cannot, therefore, survive it. But there is something in the reasoning soul of man which goes beyond the individual, coming to him from outside. It is truly divine. It is pure reason, the *Noûs*. This divine guest devotes itself to man during life; and when the body is dissolved with the soul proper, it returns to the universal Reason, which is God, and in which it is absorbed.

God has a real existence. He is the necessary principle of all things, the end which alone can explain all. He did not create matter or movement, which are eternal; but He is the Prime Mover, Himself immovable, without whom no movement is intelligible. He is the supreme end toward which all tends and proceeds. Movement and life in all nature are nothing else than an immense momentum of love, conscious or unconscious, toward perfection; that is, toward God, pure thought, thought realized, substantial, living thought. This metaphysical conception is certainly one of the most majestic, and, despite the severity of its expressions, one of the most poetic, promulgated in the history of human thinking.

Aristotle, like Plato, closely connects politics and morals; politics, for him, includes and dominates all the practical sciences as the city envelops and dominates all the individuals. For the sake of greater clearness, however, he studies separately the duties of the individual and the laws that govern the body politic.

We shall give the main outline of the plan of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The end of all being, by general consent, is happiness. But it is found, above all, in the weal of the soul, particularly in virtue, or moral and intellectual perfection. Moral virtue is not innate, nor is it, as Plato believed, a direct result of knowledge. It is a habit of the soul, acquired by free will, which makes it easier to practise morality. It consists essentially in a reasonable equilibrium between too little and too much; virtue lies in the "golden mean." Courage is halfway between cowardice and recklessness. Nothing in excess (*μηδὲν ἄγαν*) was the dictum of popular wisdom. Aristotle

repeated this in turn. He analyzed successively free action, the different moral virtues, the intellectual virtues, and the absolute — or incorrigible — vices; and studied man in associations of friendship with his fellows. The work closed with an admirable final book, in which he considered the relative values of the different sorts of happiness. He found the most perfect happiness in the activity of the divine element of the soul, Reason. The lucid breadth of his theory is evident, as it gathers from popular consciousness as well as from the books of sages various scattered truths, and, uniting them all into a thoroughly organic system, finishes and crowns the whole with a contemplative theory that summarizes both his metaphysics and his moral ideal.

His "state" is not, like that of Plato, a military convent governed by philosophers, but a moderate republic, the elements of which are taken from the real world by a man acquainted with all existing state governments; and are so combined as to avoid extremes. The theory of a golden mean rules in politics as well as in morals. Far from excluding the family, as Plato does, he sees in it the necessary germ of the city. With his usual method of seeking knowledge of perfect being along the lines of the evolution that has produced it, he begins by studying the family as a rudimentary political organism. He finds in it the germ of every species of political power. He finds even slavery, and admits it, in so far as it rests upon averred inequality of nature between master and slave. After the study of the family, he passes to a criticism of the theories of his predecessors. In the last five books of his *Politics* he expounds his personal theories, and scatters broadcast, on every subject, the profoundest and most original observations. He is no narrow, categorical dogmatist. His wide information showed him that the different forms of government are not good or bad *a priori*; royalty, aristocracy, democracy, may be equally good relatively to certain social conditions. If he has any personal preference, it is for moderate, or mixed, governments, as they seem to him most in conformity with the notion of the golden mean. But he absolutely condemns only the corrupt forms of royalty, aristocracy, and democracy, namely, tyranny, oligarchy, and demagoguery, or *ὀχλοκρατία*, since in them unreasonable passions predominate. His theory of revolutions shows as much political and psychological insight as knowledge of facts. His theory of education is likewise excellent. The aim is to make the child above all a good citizen, an intelligent, virtuous man. Among the things which he is taught, some are of immediate practical utility — reading, writing, drawing, gymnastics; some, like music, or in certain respects gymnastics, have for their object the

perfection of soul and body, and are no less necessary than the others. Education being indispensable for the good of the state, the state is to give and supervise it.

In *rhetoric* his great discovery is that he clearly determined the aim of oratorical art and deduced the nature of its essential elements. Rhetoric is an appendix of dialectic; neither of them aims to give knowledge of a particular order of facts. They consist in right reasoning on every subject: dialectic, with great rigor; rhetoric, in a more popular, less strict manner. The true object of rhetoric, then, is not, as the orators believed, to catalogue the divisions and subdivisions of discourse, or make a collection of exordiums, but to study the theories of oratorical demonstration. Such is the task which he proposed for himself. He analyzed successively the ideas of the useful, the beautiful, and the just, on which are essentially based political eloquence, declamation, and judicial eloquence. He reviewed the various commonplaces (τόποι) useful in each type of oratory. He showed how the orator could increase the force of his argument by the authority of his character or by his manner, by a knowledge of the passions of his audience, and by cleverness in managing them. Then comes a series of analyses of the principal passions, examined each by itself, then in its relation with the different ages and conditions of human life. The analyses are of striking precision, and some, for example the description of the three ages, are particularly celebrated, owing to numerous imitations made of them. The work has a third book, originally separate, it seems, but authentic beyond doubt. This is devoted to style (λέξις), then to invention (τάξις). The twelve chapters on style are certainly the most profound and precise now in existence on the history of Greek oratorical style and some of its essential characteristics.

The *Poetics* is no less celebrated than the *Rhetoric*, and has exercised perhaps a greater influence. Unfortunately, it is not so well preserved. The work was originally in two books. The second, treating of comedy, is lost. The first alone remains, and it is in a much disordered condition. The *Poetics*, as we have it, is composed of twenty-six chapters, including: (1) a general introduction on poetry, — its different types, its psychological origin, and its historical beginnings (chap. I-V); (2) a mutilated part on the theory of tragedy (chap. VI-XXII); (3) some fragments of a theory of epic poetry (chap. XXIII-XXIV); (4) miscellaneous questions (chap. XXV); and (5) a comparison between epic poetry and tragedy (chap. XXVI). The interminable and fastidious dogmatic discussions of modern times upon the "rules" of Aristotle distort the system set forth in his work. In reality, the author is quite unlike



either the Abbé d'Aubignac or a college pedant. He is a profound and powerful intelligence, analyzing poetry, as he analyzes all other facts and things, with precision, rigor, and extraordinary knowledge of their historical development. Poetry for Aristotle, as for Plato, is an imitation; yet a free one, able to represent things as more beautiful or less beautiful than they really are<sup>1</sup>—an imitation which idealizes objects and is, therefore, more “serious and philosophical” than history.<sup>2</sup> Thus poetry is vindicated against the reproaches of Plato, who scorned it as being the mere image of an empty image. There are as many different poetic types as there are ways of imitating. Poetic and musical imitation is slowly transformed and perfected, like all else that lives. Tragedy is the highest and most complete form of poetry. Then comes the definition of tragedy. It is profound, full of meaning, so incisive in the analysis of its object that it almost goes beyond Greek tragedy to express the essence of the drama of the future and of all time. The whole theory of tragedy springs out of this definition. Action is the essential thing, the rest is secondary. We shall not analyze the artistic system advocated in the *Poetics*, which has been rendered familiar to all by the discussions of modern rhetoric. But let us note a characteristic detail. The famous theory of the three unities is said to come from Aristotle; but the only one of which he expressly states a theory is that of action. On the unity of place, he says never a word. On the unity of time, he speaks only incidentally, as of something usual and almost normal, owing to the difference between tragedy and epic poetry. This seems to be the true character of his teaching as compared with the dogmatism of modern French classics. Aristotle notes a fact as being frequent and worthy of attention. Scaliger and Boileau exalt it into a law, which they publish as coming from Sinai.

**19. Aristotle as a Writer. Conclusion.**—The works of Aristotle belong to categories so different that, if one seeks to appreciate him as a writer, it is necessary to distinguish between the poet, the author of dialogues, the writer of works of erudition, and the deliverer of the unfinished, though often admirable, notes found in his acroamatic works.

Of the poet we shall say only a word. The author of the *Festive Hymn to Hermias* (popularly called the *Hymn to Virtue*) was certainly not a Pindar, yet more than a mere versifier. His spirit was lofty and fully imbued with the substance of the great lyric works.

The dialogues were highly praised by the ancients. Dionysius of Halicarnassus commends their style for its elegance, clearness,

<sup>1</sup> *Poet.* 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Poet.* 9.

and force.<sup>1</sup> Cicero speaks with admiration of the "golden stream" of Aristotle's eloquence, which tears away and uproots the arguments of his adversaries.<sup>2</sup> Quintilian eulogizes his fulness and sweetness.<sup>3</sup> A few fragments allow us, if not to judge from thorough knowledge, at least to explain in part this admiration. Aristotle perhaps never showed himself the equal of Plato. He appeared to be rather the diligent pupil of Isocrates than the poetic genius of the *Phædrus* or the *Symposium*. These were the works of a Greek Cicero, a solidier man, however, and a more substantial thinker, though probably less polished and witty. Aristotle tried to suit the discourses of his personages to their character, we are told. Therein he was dramatic, yet certainly much less so than Plato, in whom all is true to life. At the head of each book of the dialogues, Aristotle, like his Latin imitator, Cicero, loved to appear on the scene himself to expound his views.<sup>4</sup>

Among the works of erudition, many were evidently not literary. In the *Didascalica*, for example, one could scarcely ask more than the merit of clearness. But this was sufficient to make his erudition agreeable. The clearness of his *Collection of Rhetorical Treatises* had put the originals in oblivion. It is the kind of merit chiefly found in the treatise on the *Constitution of Athens*. Here the style is purposely bare and bald, but lucidly clear, sometimes graceful, yet never with affectation. All this art, in short, by its justice, good taste, and perfect adaptation to the subject treated, is that of a good writer, if not that of a great artist.

Can one speak of an art of composition and style in the acroamatic works? What is to be said of the composition of a work made up perhaps of bits and pieces? What of style in writings that are mere sketches, composed for the author's personal use, and then altered by editors? We cannot speak, perhaps, of their invention, as it no longer appears with clearness in the majority of the treatises; but the case is not the same with reference to the style. Pascal is manifest even in the fragments of the *Pensées* reviewed and published at Port Royal. Aristotle, as a writer, is no Pascal; yet he has vigorous originality and an indelible personal stamp. The style of the treatises is the oldest specimen of a strictly scientific style in Greece. It has, of course, literary defects as well as merits. The literary defect, but scientific merit, is that of being technical. He has a peculiar terminology, but it is precise. His language abounds in new terms, often barbarous in appearance, but

<sup>1</sup> *Critique on the Ancient Writers*, 4, 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Acad. Prior.* II. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Inst. Or.* X. 1, 83.

<sup>4</sup> *Ad Att.* IV, 16, and XIII, 19; *Ad Q. F.* III, 5.

constant and well-defined in meaning, that correspond to the dominant ideas of his philosophy. Aside from the technical terms, he uses with extreme exactitude the words of the ordinary language. He cares little about the delicacies and graces of Atticism, to which he is a stranger by birth. But he is a good, able worker in that "common dialect" (*κοινὴ διάλεκτος*) which was to become the language of all men of culture. Sometimes he invents vivid figures of speech and happy metaphors. He is as impassive as science itself, absolutely lacking sensibility; yet he always abounds in the imagination which enables scholars to conceive things aright. His sentences, like his vocabulary, show the strong vigor of his mind. They are often brief and elliptical, — those of a man who speaks his thought with as few words as possible. These short sentences are put together as it may happen. They are not really obscure, yet they are difficult. Even when the sentence is complex, the idea is one of geometrical clearness, and there is something imperious in its turn. Sometimes, though rarely, this objective, impersonal style attains superior beauty. The portrait of youth in the *Rhetoric* or the eulogy of contemplative life in the *Ethics* are examples. But then the thought itself calls forth in the mind of the reader the emotions that the author abstains from suggesting. It is not he, but his subject, that is eloquent. Plato or Pascal would have said the same things differently even in unfinished notes. On the whole, in the treatises, as in the dialogues, we recognize always the same Aristotle, the same vigorous writer, capable of eloquence when he chooses, yet eloquent not by nature, but rather in spite of his nature. He is a good writer, rather than a literary master.

His real greatness is not there, but in the prodigious part he has had in the world's thought. Coming at the very close of the period of Greek independence, he made the synthesis, by his extraordinary erudition, of all that had gone before. By this erudition, he opened the way for the period of scholarship then just beginning. In the general order of thought, he is the first representative of a fundamental tendency of the human mind, the positive, erudite tendency, as opposed to the idealistic, geometrical, poetic tendency of Plato. Then, as an unwearying classifier, sure of himself, imperious in his assertions, full of confidence in the power of intellect, astonishingly rich in profound, incisive observations of all sorts, he had all he needed to produce an effect on the thought of thinking men, and more justly still on that of the superstitious ages, who made him the master of all science. His contribution to human progress has been without a parallel, partly owing to circumstances ulterior to his own merit. These belong to the past; but his intrinsic merit is,

nevertheless, one of the greatest to be found in the history of human thinking.

**20. The Lyceum after Aristotle: Theophrastus.** — The school of Aristotle, the "Lyceum," followed with zeal the path of studious and erudite research inaugurated by the philosopher. Its organization was like that of the Academy. It, too, had its *scholarchs*, of whom the first two were Theophrastus and Strato. When Theophrastus had bequeathed his property to his disciples, the material needs of the Lyceum were as well provided for as those of the Academy. Besides Theophrastus and Strato, others, such as Eudemus, Demetrius of Phaleron, Dicæarchus, Aristoxenus, and Heraclides of Pontus, were chosen to succeed them. But their works hardly belong to literature, in the strict sense, or even to philosophy properly speaking. The Peripatetic School did not concern itself with profound theories; it held that Aristotle had fixed permanently the essential principles of metaphysical speculation and method. It devoted itself, then, to researches of detail. Eudemus busied himself with the history of doctrines. Strato was particularly a physicist, less interested in causes, however, than in facts and classes. Dicæarchus, Aristoxenus, and Heraclides of Pontus were scholars whom we shall meet with later. Demetrius of Phaleron won a reputation as a writer, but more as an orator than as a philosopher. The only great literary name is that of Theophrastus, the immediate successor of Aristotle; and he is rather an encyclopædist than a man of letters.<sup>1</sup>

He was born at Eresus in the island of Lesbos in 372. He died in 287, at the age of eighty-five. He came to Athens when young, and listened first to Plato, then to Aristotle, becoming the latter's favorite pupil. Aristotle is said to have named him Theophrastus — his real name being Tyrtamus. Aristotle also opposed his quickness to the slowness of Callisthenes, and repeated with reference to them — the legend says — the famous apothegm of the rein and the spur, which has been attributed in succession to so many different personages. Theophrastus became really an Athenian, notwithstanding the well-known anecdote of the woman who, selling herbs, recognized him as a foreigner by his accent. He passed his whole life at Athens, except a brief period of exile in the reign of Demetrius Poliorcetes, when that ruler drove out the philosophers.

He left behind many writings. Diogenes Laertius enumerates nearly two hundred and forty. Though most of them are lost,

<sup>1</sup> The complete works of Theophrastus, with the exception of the *Characters*, are edited by Wimmer, Leipzig, Teubner, 3 vols., 1864-1881. These are edited by R. C. Jebb, *The Characters of Theophrastus*, London, 1870. The most recent edition of them is that of the Leipzig Philological Society, Teubner, 1898. La Bruyère's *Caractères* is a free translation.



a glance shows that, like Aristotle, he treated every domain of science, and often took up again the subjects handled by his master, to make the study more thorough, or complete it along analogous lines. Thus, by the side of the collection of *Constitutions* of Aristotle, he erected a monument of the same kind on the study of legislations, by his great work *On Laws*. He gave much time to researches in the history of doctrines: his *Opinions of Physicists* form sixteen books. Besides numerous and considerable fragments, we have two complete works of his: the *History of Plants* (more exactly *Researches concerning Plants*, *Περὶ φυτῶν ἱστορίαι*) in nine books, and the *Causes of Plants* (*Περὶ φυτῶν αἰτιῶν*) in six books; also a celebrated little work, the *Characters*, whose purpose it is difficult to determine.

The *History of Plants* is essentially a descriptive work. As the author says in the beginning, he aims chiefly to set forth the distinctions between the various species. The facts cited are multitudinous in number. Many seem to be the result of his own observation; yet most of them come from reports made by others. His application, if not always his critical judgment, his effort to classify the characteristics of plants according to their importance, and his faith in the regularity of natural laws, are praiseworthy. The exposition of these numerous facts, moreover, is pleasing and elegant. The author is a scholarly naturalist and a good writer.

The treatise on the *Causes of Plants*, which form the sequel to the preceding, aims to explain, by means of the four "causes" of Aristotle, all the "distinctions" noted in the preceding work. The task, evidently, was more difficult than that of merely presenting positive facts. But his philosophical essay has a lasting value, despite the arbitrariness of certain explanations, owing, here again, to the multitude of positive facts conscientiously reported and clearly set forth.

The *Characters*, of which one would get a most inexact idea, if one thought to find in Theophrastus a Greek La Bruyère, are the work of a scholar rather than that of a literary author. The work, in the most complete manuscripts, includes thirty-one "characters," preceded by a preface. Each "character" has as its title the name of a moral fault—very rarely that of a merit. This is defined after the manner of Aristotle; then follows a more or less lengthy description of the external signs by which it is revealed. The style is clear, simple, unornamented, and serves only as a vesture for purely scientific thought. If there is occasional wit in the sketches, it creeps in almost in spite of the author, because the subject lends itself thereto. What is this work, and what was the design of its author? It is

evident at once that the text is much altered and did not come in its present form from his hands. Is it a collection of notes and materials left unfinished? Is it an extract of some more extensive work, of a treatise on morals, or perhaps on comedy, in which these descriptions found place, like the analyses of the passions and the ages in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*? There are difficulties in the way of each of these hypotheses, and the problem cannot be solved. The moral and literary interest of the *Characters* is beyond doubt; for Theophrastus is a shrewd psychologist and a careful writer. His field of observation is limited to general defects, such as falsity, pride, coarseness, and foolishness. He does not make individual portraits, yet he brings to his analyses an acute discrimination. In flattery, in pride, in coarseness, he makes three or four distinct subspecies. The subtlety is not artificial, but is based on observation of real shades of difference. Unlike Aristotle, he does not confine himself to abstract analysis, but proceeds at once to a concrete, picturesque description. The proud man, the flatterer, the coarse man—not pride, flattery, or coarseness—are what he has in mind and describes. He puts into these pictures none of the cultured graces and delicate word-painting of La Bruyère, but preserves a form of composition purposely monotonous, to harmonize with scientific description. He is a naturalist in the world of morals, though with keen observation, expressing himself at times with picturesque, piquant exactness.

With Theophrastus, we come to the beginnings of the Alexandrian period and the new philosophic schools. During this time, Attic oratory, as well as philosophy, finished its development; and to that we must now give our attention.

## CHAPTER XX

### ATTIC ORATORY

1. The Development of Oratory in the Fourth Century.
2. The Masters of Rhetoric.
3. Judicial Oratory: Andocides.
4. Lysias and the Art of the Logographers.
5. Isæus.
6. The Oratory of Declamation: Isocrates; his Life and Work.
7. The Orations of Isocrates. The Oratorical Period.
8. His Theory of Education.
9. Political Oratory: General View.
10. Demosthenes; his Life and Career.
11. Pleas of Demosthenes in Civil Cases.
12. His Political Oratory; his Characteristics as an Orator and as a Statesman.
13. His Most Important Orations. Conclusion.
14. Æschines.
15. Hyperides.
16. Lycurgus.
17. Dinarchus.
18. Demetrius of Phaleron. Conclusion of the Chapter on Attic Oratory.

**1. The Development of Oratory in the Fourth Century.** — Of the three forms of classic prose, the last to attain perfection was oratory, probably because it was the youngest. In the time of Thucydides and Plato, in fact, there is already a precedent for history and philosophy; but written oratory does not begin before Gorgias and Antiphon. Even in written oratory the types do not all produce masterpieces at the same time. Judicial oratory, which was cultivated first in Sicily, attained its earliest finished form at the hands of Lysias. The oratory of declamation, inaugurated by Gorgias, came into full bloom only with Isocrates. Finally, political oratory, though scarcely cultivated by the earliest orators who wrote their speeches, as it is the most difficult of all, does not reach its best form until the time of Demosthenes and his contemporaries. It is the successive appearance of masterpieces in the three types of oratory which fixes the landmarks, so to speak, for the course of its history in the fourth century, and groups its details about the three great names just mentioned. In addition to the orators proper, certain others, though little more than masters of rhetoric, exercised some influence, and so merit passing mention.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** General edition of the Attic orators: Stephanus, Geneva, 1575; Reiske, Leipzig, 1772; Bekker, Berlin, 1823; Baizer and Sauppe, 9 vols., Zurich, 1838-1850. *Oratores Attici* (omitting *Demosthenes*), Didot Collection, 1846-1847, with a Latin version by C. Müller. Editions of the several orators will be mentioned in connection with each.

Consult: Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit*, 4 vols., 2d ed., Leipzig, Teubner, 1887, the classic work on the subject; G. Perrot, *L'Éloquence judiciaire à Athènes*, Paris, 1873; J. Girard, *Étude sur l'éloquence attique*, Paris, 1874; R. C. Jebb, *The Attic Orators from Antiphon to Isæus*, London, 1876.

**2. The Masters of Rhetoric.** — Two of these became celebrated: Thrasymachus of Chalcedon and Theodorus of Byzantium. These two men, by precept and personal endeavor, added something to the idea in the minds of their contemporaries concerning the merits of an orator. Thrasymachus, who appears to have been the elder of the two, is an interlocutor of Socrates in Plato's *Republic*. He is represented there as a spirited, enthusiastic speaker, and sanguine in temperament. The portrait agrees well with what we know of him. His ability to represent the pathetic was one of his chief attainments. He knew the art of exciting and assuaging emotion; he could bring tears to all eyes by his pictures of old age and poverty, could provoke anger and indignation, could blacken an adversary's character, or energetically repel an accusation. He gave to this element of oratory a degree of attention wholly new. Coming after the Olympic majesty of Pericles, the strained nobility of Gorgias, and the slightly dry dialectic of Antiphon, he was original in conceiving the passionate style in oratory. He tried to exemplify this style in some compositions since lost (except for a few fragments), and particularly in various text-books (*Treatise on Rhetoric*, *Collection of Exordiums and Perorations*, etc.). One of the most celebrated bore the characteristic title, *Commiserations* ("Ελεοι). It was evidently a collection of the commonplaces of pathos, designed to instruct his pupils, by examples, in the use of the oratory of passion. He tried to tone down the pretentious soaring made fashionable by the school of Gorgias, and put forth the first models of what is called the medium style. If Thrasymachus was not a great writer, he was certainly a very efficient master. Theodorus of Byzantium, a younger contemporary, won such a reputation as a teacher that he overshadowed Lysias and caused him to seek renown in another field, that of judicial oratory.<sup>1</sup> With this exception, we know very little of him. The most remarkable thing about him as a master of rhetoric is the subtlety which led him to distinguish, in the composition of speeches, new subdivisions, and in argumentation, processes of reasoning that had not yet been analyzed.<sup>2</sup>

**3. Judicial Oratory: Andocides.**<sup>3</sup> — Although Andocides figures among the Ten Orators mentioned in the Alexandrian Canon, that is, among the recognized masters of Attic oratory, his reputation was never very brilliant. He was, besides, less an artist than an amateur. He did not make it his profession to be a logographer; he pleaded only those cases in which he was personally interested.

<sup>1</sup> Cic., *Brutus*, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Phædrus*, p. 266 E; Aristotle, *Rhet.* II, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Editions by Blass, Teubner, 1880; and by J. Lipsius, Tauchnitz, 1888.



Neither his troubled life nor his character allowed him to show his native endowments at their best.

His life was that of an adventurer. Born about 440, of one of the most illustrious families at Athens, he participated in that golden youth which passed its time in pleasure, visiting sophists, and intriguing in politics. About 420, strongly siding with the oligarchic party, he was suspected of having parodied the Mysteries. In 415, after the mutilation of the Hermæ, he was thrown into prison. To escape death, he turned evidence against men whom he pretended were guilty. Though not condemned, he was dishonored. He went into voluntary exile, and began to travel, busy with commerce and moneymaking, and not over-scrupulous for the honor of his business transactions. On two occasions, in 411 and 408, he tried to regain the favor of his party, but without success. At the time of the second attempt, he pronounced the oration *On his Return*. He came back to Athens only after the amnesty of Thrasybulus in 403, and then advocated a democratic policy with all the fervor of a tyro. Old hatreds revived. In 399, he was accused of impiety. The oration *On the Mysteries* is his reply. This time he was victorious. In 391 he appears among the plenipotentiaries commissioned to negotiate a treaty with Lacedæmon. To this event must be referred the oration *On the Peace*. But his attempt failed, and, according to one biographer, he was again exiled. This is the last that is known of him.

Amid so many adventures and disturbances he wrote very little. We have under his name four orations; besides the three already mentioned, there is one *Against Alcibiades*, which is manifestly apocryphal. The ancients cited only two others, of which some short fragments remain. The three orations whose authenticity is certain have the peculiarity of being much different from one another in style. The oration *On his Return* is an imitation of the style of Antiphon. The oration *On the Mysteries* is the work of a clever orator, persuasive, easy, familiar in attack, sometimes eloquent. The oration *On the Peace* is an indefinite, cold composition, extremely feeble in thought. On the whole, it is evident that Andocides never was fully able to reveal his personality. He is at his best in the oration *On the Mysteries*; but here again his nature is not clearly shown, and his art is never of superior quality. The work has a vivid historic interest because of the testimony — unaccredited, however — which the orator gives concerning the mutilation of the Hermæ. From a literary point of view, it is not without merit. The narratives are necessarily long, but vivid and picturesque. The argumentation is clever; the style, though somewhat careless, has

naturalness and animation. It is owing to these qualities of naturalness and animation that he deserves his place in the history of Athenian oratory; after Gorgias and Antiphon, he proceeded in the right direction. By a happy instinct, he felt the necessity of these qualities and deserves credit for doing so; but it was reserved for others to bring to the task a feeling for art and a literary delicacy of which he was ignorant.

**4. Lysias and the Art of the Logographers.**<sup>1</sup>—Lysias, on the contrary, was an exquisite artist, one of the most perfect models of Atticism in that peculiar judicial discourse which the logographers composed to be read or recited by others, the real pleaders.

He was born at Athens about 440, and came of a Syracusan family. His father, Cephalus, a rich armorer of Syracuse, had transferred his industry to Athens a few years before. It is this Cephalus who appears in the early part of Plato's *Republic*. The conversation begins in his house at the Piræus; the old man—for Cephalus is supposed to be advanced in years—is a sage, amiable and universally respected. Though a simple metic, he is the friend and equal of the foremost citizens at Athens. In this distinguished house, Lysias with two brothers grew to manhood. About 425, when fifteen years old, he went to Thurii in Magna Græcia, where Tisias had left disciples and successors. Here he studied rhetoric, and his brother Polemarchus devoted himself to philosophy. In 413, the disaster of the Athenians before Syracuse rendered perilous throughout Sicily the situation of the friends of Athens. These included Lysias and his brother, both of whom returned to Athens. There Lysias began the profession of rhetoric. The revolution of 404 was a disaster for the sons of Cephalus. As rich men and partisans of the democracy, they fell a prey to the hostility of the Thirty, who imprisoned them. Lysias succeeded in escaping, but Polemarchus was put to death. The reestablishment of the democracy brought Lysias back to Athens, and the friendship of Thrasybulus won for him a decree granting the rights of citizenship. Then he brought to trial Eratosthenes, one of the Thirty, the principal agent in the death of Polemarchus. Not long afterward, the decree of Thrasybulus was revoked, and Lysias again became a metic. Thus deprived of the right to take part in public affairs, he again devoted himself to liter-

<sup>1</sup> Critical editions by Scheibe, Teubner; Cobet-Hartmann, Amsterdam, 1890; Thalheim, Leipsic, 1901; and Westermann, Leipsic, 1854. Select orations with notes, by Rauchenstein, Berlin, 1881-1884; and Frohberger, Berlin, 1880-1881. American edition by Morgan, Boston, 1895; English edition by Schuckburgh, London, 1890.

There is a fine French critique by J. Girard in his *Études sur l'éloquence attique*.

ary work. Rhetoric proper did not satisfy him. Whether because the growing reputation of Theodorus of Byzantium hindered him, as we are told by Cicero, or for some other reason, he devoted himself to a more serious and active oratory. He became a logographer, or writer of speeches for others. It seems that he died about 380, with the reputation of being the foremost logographer in Athens.

In antiquity more than four hundred speeches, ostensibly his, were extant. Many, doubtless, were apocryphal; but even the severest critics recognized about half as authentic. Of this immense oratorical collection there remain to-day somewhat more than thirty complete orations or extracts, some in very bad condition. On the whole, it is only in about fifteen that we find a really faithful image of his genius. Of his sophistic writings, absolutely nothing remains, unless one considers as authentic the discourse on love in Plato's *Phædrus*. But, howsoever instructive, this is probably a mere imitation. In the second part of his life he composed another declamation, the *Olympic Discourse*, delivered in 388. We have only its exordium. He exhorted the Greeks to concord and union against the tyrants, urging his auditors, by way of commencing the struggle, to burn without delay the tents sent by Dionysius of Syracuse to Olympia; and he obtained at least, we are told, the expulsion of the Syracusan ambassadors. The advice was odd, and, judging from the exordium, the oration was not powerful. He also composed, at least once, a deliberative oration for some statesman (*Or.* XXXIV). Only a few pages of it, however, are extant. His real calling, aside from the accusation against Eratosthenes, was that of a logographer; and it is these two forms of judicial oratory that clearly vindicate his talent to-day.

The accusation against Eratosthenes is a fine oration and justly celebrated. In a neat, short, judicious exordium, clever, though perhaps too carefully written, he states briefly the magnitude of the wrongs he has suffered, the public interest affected in the case, his lack of experience in court, and his confidence in the tribunal. These are traditional commonplaces, which each orator handles in his own way. Then comes the narration, wonderful in its clearness, brevity, plausibility, persuasive acuteness, and sober, restrained pathos. The orator narrates the facts in few words; really things must have taken place as described—all is so simple, vivid, natural. Here and there irony breaks the monotony of the narrative, which gradually becomes more animated till it reaches the climax. There the orator brings together the various sentiments of pity for the victims and hatred against the tyrants which he has imperceptibly excited. Then begins the discussion proper, vivid and earnest, but

summary and simple. A fine peroration contrasts the justice of the Thirty with that of the democracy, attacks the partisans of Eratosthenes, makes an appeal to all the parties, now reconciled in justice and liberty, and closes with a brief recapitulation, that is energetic and noble in tone. The author of the oration is evidently a master of language. His tempered eloquence is both spirited and elegant. In its truthfulness, moderation, full self-possession, justness of substance and form, and faultless taste, it is perfectly Attic. Perhaps, however, the gravity of the situation calls for more vehemence and emphasis. (Demosthenes would have spoken differently). The oration is a masterpiece, yet it is not in defending himself that Lysias is unrivalled. He is a greater artist, assuredly, in subjects better adapted to the nature of his genius. His triumph was in composing speeches for some one else, for simple persons, honest, unsophisticated people, and, lending to them, as a logographer, his own exquisite sagacity.

The art of the logographers was contemporary with rhetoric itself. Antiphon had exercised it with success at Athens. Yet Lysias is the really classic example; for there was "preestablished harmony," so to speak, between his character and the laws of the type. The logographer was not expected to appear personally in debate and did not think himself called upon to be eloquent. He concealed himself behind his client, who spoke ostensibly his own sentiments, as a humble citizen unacquainted with forensic, and obliged to be brief on account of the clepsydra, which parsimoniously measured his time. The logographer, in a way, did the work of a dramatic poet; like Sophocles or Menander, he needed to identify himself with the personage that appeared on the scene. This was generally a man of the people, sometimes a countryman without experience, at any rate a man whose interest it was to appear before the judges as being moderate, simple, and incapable of the intrigue of the professional litigant. For the logographer, the height of art was to show as little brilliance as possible, or at least not to display it, and manifest only that type of art which appears to none but delicate connoisseurs and consists in perfect naturalness of substance and form.

But Lysias possessed to perfection all the gifts that could enable him to realize such an ideal, and in this use of his talent his very defects were turned to his advantage. His style is of charming simplicity. In the matter of diction, he confines himself to pure Attic, with no admixture of poetic forms or of new words. The current language was sufficient. He was content to speak it with exact precision. He even avoided too strong figures, too bold metaphors, all that could betray the orator's profession. His sentences



are generally short. They do not always conform to rules, yet they are generally simple in design — periodic, brief, and with a unity that is harmonious and firm. The ancient critics did not weary of eulogies on the perfection of his periods; and it is perhaps here that the artist as such would be most plainly manifest, were it not that the perfection is so easy, complete, and practical, so well suited to the subject. Certain consonances or symmetries, in the manner of Gorgias, reservedly accentuated the form of the ideas, yet without ever engaging attention. His lucid, sober, somewhat dry argumentation is well suited to a speaker who improvises and is more occupied with his evident rights than concerned for the subtleties of dialectic. It breathes honesty; sometimes it is even artless, yet without excluding a measure of shrewdness. It contains nothing like quibbling; it gains the confidence of the judges at once by an air of good faith that could not be mere appearance. His thoroughly well-ordered invention, while conforming to the necessary rules of good sense, is not excessively refined; exordium, narration, discussion, peroration, these are the natural elements of every plea and the only ones that he made use of. He is on his guard against the too subtle divisions made by certain rhetoricians. His orations, therefore, are simple, clear, perfectly natural, and highly persuasive. Most of his exordiums were remarkable for their extreme simplicity. If some of them seem to us a little too artificial, it is because, as we have said, the schools of rhetoric had their collections of exordiums, and the influence of these collections sometimes becomes manifest. But the Athenian judges could not have been greatly offended by them. The narrations almost always formed the essential feature of the pleas of Lysias, and they are all real masterpieces. Nowhere else is the style more easy and artless. There is no apparent effort to turn facts to the advantage of the case; one seems to hear the bare truth. The simple, precise pleader must be an honest man. Even before he commences the discussion, the judges are quite ready to listen; and his conclusion seems to be deduced from the facts themselves. Hence the discussion proper does not occupy much space. Why should it? If he had needed to convert a hostile audience, it would be insufficient. But are not the judges already his friends? Are they not won beforehand by his lucid moderation and reasonable simplicity? In all the orations of the Athenian orators, the discussion proper is followed by a refutation of the arguments anticipated from the opposition, and generally this is accompanied by personal attacks. Lysias is no exception to the rule, but he obeys it with moderation and reserve. The peroration is as short as possible — a few words, as was usual.

on the services rendered by the pleader to the city, and on the democracy of his sentiments, followed, without recapitulation of arguments, by a short closing sentence.

The pleas of Lysias are of very different sorts, and touch upon the most varied questions. The whole social life of the times is disclosed, with its prejudices, its occupations, and its sentiments. The orator's language assumes every tone from grave seriousness to mirth. Its historical and literary interest is therefore considerable. Two or three examples, rapidly analyzed, will suffice to show the orator's talent in its most characteristic aspects.

Let us examine as specimens of serious discourse his pleas in a case of adultery (*On the Murder of Eratosthenes*) and in a case of guardianship (*Against Diogiton*). Euphiletus is being prosecuted before a heliastic court as a murderer, for having slain the enemy of his honor, Eratosthenes, who had been taken in the act of crime. Half of the plea, which is, moreover, very short, is occupied with the narrative of the facts. Nothing could be simpler or more adroit. It is clear, in fact, that if the crime of Eratosthenes against Euphiletus becomes manifest, the latter's vengeance is pardoned in advance. To this end the whole narrative is directed. It is exquisite in simplicity, clearness, and restrained emotion. Euphiletus describes his long-continued confidence, the first unheeded intimations of an intrigue, the positive denunciation, which caused him anxiety, his resolution to learn the truth, his prudence in the investigation, his discovery, and the punishment of the culprit. Then the case is won. Without further raising his voice, by the mere force of truth, he has brought about persuasion. When the orator shall have asked that the law be read and the witnesses cited, it will be necessary only to discuss two or three objections of detail that can be raised, and to conclude. The plea is not only a model of oratorical art, but also a vivid picture of Athenian manners. All the personages of the action are sketched with so light and sure a hand that they live before our eyes. In the discourse *Against Diogiton*, we have a case of wards defrauded by their guardian, who is also their grandfather. The speaker in their behalf is their sister's husband. The exordium, a model of simple, persuasive dignity, is as follows:—

“If the question, judges, had been less serious, I should never have allowed these children to appear before you; for I regard quarrels between relatives as highly dishonorable, and I know that both parties are looked upon with severity by you, one for the wrong they have done, the other for not having been willing to suffer aught from their relatives. But these children, judges, have been shamelessly robbed and ill-treated by those who ought to have done them good;

when they came to me, their brother-in-law, and asked my aid, I could not refuse to speak in their behalf; for I am the husband of their sister, who is Diogiton's grandchild. Owing to the entreaties of both parties, I at first got them to submit the matter to the arbitration of their friends, for I wished above all not to admit the public into our confidence; but Diogiton, disregarding the evidence, refused to listen to anything; and, instead of accepting the judgment of his friends, preferred to have the matter decided by the courts, running the risk of incurring the extreme of infamy rather than avert our accusation by doing us justice. Therefore, judges, if I show you that these children have been treated by their grandfather and guardian as no one else at Athens ever has been treated, even by strangers, I beg you to see to it that they have justice done them; but if I do not succeed in so doing, then believe what this man tells you, and look upon us henceforth as dishonest. I shall try to relate to you the facts of the case from the beginning."

The orator, in a few sentences, has brought the judges to know the main features of the case, indicated the relationship between the personages, and given the most favorable impression of his own reasonableness. Then comes the narrative of the facts. In reality, the leading rôle was played by a woman, the mother of the children and the daughter of Diogiton. She is an admirable mother, who defends her children with energy and intelligence, and her words come from the heart. There is a sort of family council in which she decides to speak her opinion. Her language is reported in the plea; one seems to hear her energetic words, permeated with maternal love, and abounding more in sentiment than in abstract ideas, as befits the language of a woman and a mother. When she had ceased to speak, the narrator tells us, there was no one but had tears in his eyes, and the company separated silently and in sadness. This whole plea has a living verity and an extreme charm. The discourse is continued by a discussion of money matters, which is incomplete.

The plea *For the Cripple* is also a masterpiece, but of a different type. The client is one of those poor cripples to whom Athenian law accorded a pension in money; he received one obol per day. He practised a petty trade that brought him some income. An enemy of his has asked the counsel of the Five Hundred, who revised each year the list of the poor in need of succor, to strike off his name. The pleader opposes this demand. The affair, evidently, was not one of those out of which an advocate was likely to grow wealthy; but Lysias, in writing the plea, was amusing himself. His client is set forth with fascinating good nature; he was probably an odd person, well known in Athens, whose appearance would tempt even a logographer of great reputation, such as Lysias. After a short exordium, perhaps a trifle too elegant to suit our taste, the

pleader recounts the charges brought for the sake of depriving him of his pension. He is in easy circumstances, it is said, by reason of his trade; he rides on horseback, keeps the company of spend-thrifts, and is formidable and otherwise violent in temper. He replies point by point, with amusing cunning and sagacious irony:—

“In the way of a legacy, judges, my father left me nothing at all; and as for my mother, I was obliged to support her till she died, two years ago. Then my trade does not bring in much; I have great difficulty in following it, and I have not yet found a purchaser who wishes to succeed me in my business. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

He had been reproached for riding on horseback.

“If I were rich, I should have my own ass, instead of mounting the horses of others. But as I cannot purchase anything so costly, I am obliged to use the horses of my friends. If my adversary should see me on an ass, he would say nothing—what could he say, in fact? And because he sees me riding on horses that are lent to me, let him not try to persuade you that I am of sound body. When I use two canes, instead of merely one, as is customary, he does not show himself eager to make that a token of good health.”<sup>2</sup>

A little farther on the pleader's language may be thus summarized: He upbraids me as violent; can one be violent, with such a physique as mine? He accuses me of keeping the company of men of little worth; but I have a trade, and my doors must be kept open for clients, like those of the perfumer and the barber. The orator closes by saying that, if he cannot boast of his choregia and his trierarchies, after the manner of the wealthy, he nevertheless gave proof of his patriotism in the time of the Thirty.

The sober, elegant, naïvely graceful Atticism of Lysias was well adapted to this sort of pleading and became the classic model for his successors. The canon of the type was henceforth fixed. It is interesting to see how far, not merely Isæus and Hyperides, but even Isocrates and Demosthenes, though so different in many ways, strove to imitate him when they needed to follow the profession of speech-writing. At Rome, men went still farther: Brutus and others wished to make him the unique, supreme type of Attic oratory, to the exclusion of Demosthenes. The movement was a paradox, a whim of the fastidious. The Atticism of Lysias is, indeed, delightful; but, though perfect in its way, other examples of oratory show greater vigor and brilliance.

\* 5. **Isæus.**<sup>3</sup>—Isæus is likewise a logographer. A Chalcidian by birth, according to some, an Athenian, according to others, he never-

<sup>1</sup> *Or.* XXIV. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 11–12.

<sup>3</sup> Critical edition by Scheibe, Teubner. Edition by Bürmann, Berlin, 1883.



theless lived at Athens, but held himself aloof from public affairs. The earliest extant oration of his to which we can assign a date belongs to the year 389; the latest to the year 353. He was, then, younger than Lysias and older than Demosthenes. As a logographer, he won a great reputation, and passed as having been the teacher of Demosthenes. This tradition, when divested of some absurd legends grafted upon it, as, for example, that which attributes to him the orations pronounced by Demosthenes against his guardians, is not in itself improbable.

Isæus seems to have left some fifty orations (not counting the apocryphal ones) and various rhetorical works. Of the orations, twelve, all relative to matters of inheritance, are still extant. They constituted one group of the primitive collection when that was divided according to the nature of the subjects treated. This group escaped destruction. The similarity of the subjects makes them even more interesting for the legal historian than for the historian of literature.

At the first glance, the talent of Isæus seems much like that of Lysias. There is the same purity and precision of language, the same clearness in sentence structure, and the same lucid, persuasive brevity of the oration as a whole. Many readers, even in antiquity, had difficulty in distinguishing the works of the two authors, as we learn from Dionysius of Halicarnassus. But a little attention reveals certain differences. In general Isæus is less skilful as a painter than Lysias, and more so as a dialectician. His sentences, though also short and clear, have not the graceful simplicity, the pleasing freedom from constraint, characteristic of his predecessor. Their turn is more vigorous and earnest. Sometimes they resemble those of Demosthenes in their imperious, urgent insistence. His dialectic is more subtle and arbitrary, and sometimes less trustworthy. He gives fewer facts and more discussion. He can arrange his discourse cleverly in view of his demonstration, can employ preparatives and prudent digressions, can divide the narration into several parts so as to unite the discussion more closely with it, can announce his plan and then summarize and repeat his proofs. He urges and emphasizes his plea when necessary, and compels his hearers to follow it without distraction.

One of his masterpieces, a plea in which are well displayed all the resources of his art, is the oration *On the Inheritance of Ciron*. For the case comprises a question of fact and one of law. The pleader must establish his good character and demonstrate the conclusions which he draws therefrom. On these two points he speaks in turn with subtle cleverness, ingenuity, precision, and emphasis.

One can understand why Demosthenes chose the oratory of Isæus as his particular model. This spirited, emphatic language suited his own vehemence.

Between Lysias and Demosthenes, there is, besides Isæus, still another who intervenes; it is Isocrates. He personifies and displays the oratory of declamation in the fourth century.

**6. The Oratory of Declamation: Isocrates; his Life and Work.**<sup>1</sup>—Isocrates, the son of Theodorus of the deme of Erchia, was born in 436. His father owned a flute manufactory, which put him in easy circumstances. Isocrates received the education of a wealthy young Athenian. He was the pupil of Prodicus; he listened also to Socrates, to whom he owes much. Yet philosophy did not deeply interest him. His father having been ruined by the Peloponnesian War, he was obliged to earn his living. He completed his oratorical education under Gorgias, then retired to Thessaly, and returned to Athens to practise the profession of a logographer. He composed pleas for about a dozen years; those still extant were probably written between 400 and 387. Thus he gained a reputation and an independent fortune. But his profession was distasteful. Questions of inheritance, fraud, injustice, seemed paltry to him. Art, for a logographer, consisted in obliterating one's personality and concealing it behind a pleader. Isocrates loved generalities, sonorous eloquence, immediate glory, applause right at hand. The oratory of the political rostrum was better fitted to satisfy him, yet he did not feel sure of succeeding there. His voice was feeble; his timidity, insurmountable. Moreover, he had none of the qualities of a man of action. What he loved in politics was chiefly the generalities, not the precise details of facts. He was a candid, unconstrained idealist, a painstaking artist, fond of tranquillity, vain, and highly sensitive, but he lacked those elements that are necessary for success in the struggles of public life. There remained epideictic oratory and the teaching of rhetoric. To this field Isocrates turned his attention. His first work of the sort must have been written between 390 and 380. The *Panegyricus* dates from 380. Then for more than forty years he was the most celebrated teacher of rhetoric in Athens and the greatest of the declaiming orators. Cicero several times speaks with admiration and praise of the school of Isocrates, from which came forth, as from another Trojan horse, so

<sup>1</sup> Critical edition by Benseler-Blass, Teubner, and an annotated edition of select orations by Schneider, Leipsic, Teubner, 3d ed., 1875.

French translation by the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre, Paris, Didot, 1862–1864.

Read the *Étude sur Isocrate*, by E. Havet, preceding the French translation of the *Antidosis* by Cartellier, Paris, 1863.

many heroes and princes of eloquence.<sup>1</sup> There were orators like Hyperides and Lysurgus, historians like Ephorus and Theopompus, and statesmen like Timotheus, the son of Conon. Isocrates, at the close of his life, was a noted personage in Greece: he had relations with Evagoras and Nicocles, kings of Salamis in Cyprus; with Archidamus, king of Sparta; with Jason of Pheræ; and with Philip of Macedon. He asked a thousand drachmæ from each of his pupils, and so grew very rich. Good health and a perfect moral equilibrium gave him extraordinary longevity. At the age of ninety-seven he was still writing his *Panathenæica*. He died the year following, after the battle of Chaeronea (338), — a voluntary death, we are told, that he might not survive the ruin of his illusions concerning Philip. But the explanation is doubtful. He married late in life, and had no children; but he had adopted his wife's son Aphareus, who was an orator and tragic poet, and whose children were to him like grandchildren of his own.

Six pleas are extant under his name, together with fifteen declamatory orations and nine letters. Some of these works are mutilated. They are about a third of what the ancients possessed; but many of the works once attributed to him were already rejected as apocryphal by the most competent critics in antiquity; though, of the works still extant, only a single oration, the *Demonicus*, and one letter — the IX — seem to be justly in doubt. Accordingly we know Isocrates very well.

We shall not discuss his *Letters*, since they present exactly the same character as the declamations, though on a lesser scale.

Nor can the pleas long occupy our attention, whatever their merit. They resemble those of Lysias in their apparent honesty, candor, and truth, the purity of their Atticism, and the propriety of their language. They show the taste for generalities and common-places, and the regard for the connection between ideas, which are characteristic of their author. Yet the orator, in his pleas, is not wholly himself, because the type of composition hinders him; and, as only a beginner, he is still trying to discover his aptitudes. Sometimes there are surprising differences of style between these pleas, due not simply to differences of subject-matter. It is evident that the author had not yet attained a well-defined idea of style. He hesitates between that of Gorgias and that of Lysias, yet no regular evolution can be traced in the changes. The pleas are works of high order; but what has given him the considerable place he holds in the history of Greek prose is his declamatory orations and his discourses of instruction. In these he was really original.

<sup>1</sup> *Id. Orat.* II, 94; cf. *Brutus*, 32, and *Orator*, 40.

**7. The Orations of Isocrates. The Oratorical Period.**—From the time of Gorgias, sophistry had tried to create an epidictic type of oratory capable of charming the fastidious. In the eyes of Isocrates it had failed, sometimes on account of the mediocrity of the subjects, which were only frivolous witticisms or labored paradoxes, sometimes by adornments of style that were lacking in truth. Isocrates had a clear consciousness of the end to be attained. His object was twofold: to give oratory a serious basis, to make it, as he said, a "philosophy"; and to lend this sober oratory a beauty of form capable of exciting in the reader a pleasure analogous to that caused by elegant verse.<sup>1</sup> He had not been the friend of Socrates in vain. According to another of his expressions, he wished to compose orations that should be in substance "pan-Hellenic and political." Such was his ambition. How did he realize it?

What are the ideas that form his philosophy? Strictly speaking, they are often moral. Some are beautiful, permeated with noble wisdom, thoroughly Greek, and truly human. Yet it is not here that he is most original; in all that has to do with private morals, he confines himself to the current ideas as the best. But he touches upon the matter only by accident. His chief business is politics; this, well saturated with morals, inspires the greater part of his oratory. The work to which he devoted his life was one of political sermonizing. His thesis can be summed up in a single word: the union of Greece against the barbarian. This broad, simple idea, combined with much that is elusive, is maintained by him from one end of his long career to the other with sincerity, conviction, and an optimism that is sometimes fanciful. Whatever the subject he is treating, he always keeps in view this fundamental idea. It is the soul of his politics, explaining and binding together all its details. This theory takes precedence of everything in the splendid image he has of Greece, which he regards as the home of intellectual culture and civilization. He has said magnificently in one passage that the thing which makes a man Greek is rather his culture than his descent.<sup>2</sup> The Persian Wars had been a splendid triumph of civilization over barbarism. But since then all was changed. The Great King was managing the affairs of Greece, and for him the disgraceful treaty of Antalcidas was the most glorious of trophies.<sup>3</sup> Had he become more powerful? No. Ten thousand Greeks had just traversed the whole of Asia, notwithstanding his menaces. His strength was due only to the disunion of Greece. The Greek cities were jealous of one another: each was weakened by internal

<sup>1</sup> *Antidosis*, 46; *Paneg.* 17 and 188; *Eragoras*, 8-11, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Paneg.* 59.

<sup>3</sup> *Phil.* 120, 180.



discord; everything was in disorder and confusion. The causes of the evil showed what should be the remedy; the Greeks must ally themselves together and accept the hegemony that would be necessary. Which state was to lead? Sparta was coarse, unlettered, tyrannical, dangerous to every one. Thebes was still worse. Athens was fitted for the noble career that in times gone by she had so gloriously followed. If she had lost standing, it was because in her internal administration she had given herself to a false democracy, to the tyranny of demagogues, who owed their power to the evil passions of the state and preyed upon its miseries. Furthermore, she had wished to govern an empire by force, and had not showed toward her allies the all-important policy of moderation (*σωφροσύνη*), necessary in cities as in individuals. By her faults, she had excited against herself violent animosities. It was not needful to recapture Amphipolis, but to practise justice and win the affection of the other Greeks. Isocrates long hoped to bring Athens back to the constitution of Solon, to the virtues of a golden age that had never existed. As his hope was slow of realization, he turned to other devices. Perhaps he had in mind Dionysius of Syracuse, and later Jason of Pheræ. These gave him no hope and he turned to Philip, in whom he saw the long-awaited chief that should bring about the peaceful union of Greece and assure her triumph over barbarism. He did not suppose for an instant that Philip, so cultured, so clever in philosophy, could have a soul less pure than his own. In all his political theories, he is truthful to detail; his criticism of Athenian politics, at home and abroad, is often penetrating. The picture of the different Greek cities is drawn with skill; the real weakness of the Great King is forcibly pointed out; and above all, the general sentiment of Isocrates, his Athenian and pan-Hellenic patriotism, and his faith in morals as the foundation of politics, are worthy of the most sympathetic admiration. The mistake of the great advocate of patriotism was that, in his artless optimism, he thought only of remedies that were worthless or even dangerous. To propose to the Athenians of the fourth century a return to the constitution of Solon was a pure chimera; but to ask them to accept Philip as their chief was a still graver error. All the orator's honesty could not make it excusable.

As Isocrates reformed declamatory eloquence in the substance of its ideas, so he reformed it in style and invention. Gorgias had sought beauty of discourse principally in dazzling brilliance of words and the jingle of phrases. Isocrates, an Athenian and a disciple of Socrates, sought it chiefly in harmonious connection of thought and in subordination of details to the whole. The words in this

system were not to attract attention.) Like Lysias, he wrote the language of the people, the purest Attic. He excluded the artificial and poetic terms that had been so dear to the school of Gorgias. (He had few images or bold metaphors.) He aimed chiefly at delicate exactness and a grandeur arising naturally from the general trend of the ideas. The words must be pleasing to the ear and in proper rhythm. They must be put together smoothly, so as to form flowing and harmonious phrases. Hence there could be no hiatus. For him, this wholly new rule was absolute. He observed it rigorously. It seemed so just to his auditors that from then on every one in Greece observed it more or less. It was a veritable revolution in Greek prose. But above all, the sentence-structure was changed. The oldest prose writers were content in general to put short phrases side by side, without organizing them into a whole. Gorgias had tried to couple them two and two by oppositions; but his procedure was monotonous. The long phrases of Thucydides were often awkward and cumbersome. Lysias had created a flexible and vivid, but short period, more appropriate to current affairs than to the orotund expression of general truths. Isocrates is the inventor of the long oratorical period, which is both unified and complex, bringing together in the sweep of a single sentence numerous particular ideas that are grouped around a principal one. Such a period adds to an intrinsic force of thought the powerful efficacy of a large and impressive oratorical rhythm. Some of the periods of Isocrates are a page in length; many cover half a page. But the length of the sentence never detracts from its clearness and lucid neatness. The imagination is aroused by an ample system of thoughts so easy to follow. Sometimes series of syllables that are alike in prosody correspond to each other so that their echo emphasizes the unity of the rhythm. But as a rule, he avoids too complete similarity as likely to be mechanical and artificial. He perceived the defect of Gorgias in making his cadences too uniform. He sought always for variety and flexibility. His long periods are admirable works of art, charming the ear and the intelligence, and giving the effect of oratorical power without the impression of effort. There is the same care in the general composition of the discourses. Like Socrates, he aims to define his subject clearly. He includes both the whole and its parts. Even when he seems to dally with digressions, he knows that he is doing so, and never loses sight of his goal. He often expressed his wish for a type of composition at once flexible and firm.<sup>1</sup>

The perfection of his art of writing gives the reader at first a keen pleasure; its lucid fulness is delightful. Many of the sen-

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Antidosis*, 11.

tences attain the highest eloquence; and yet in the end, one grows fatigued. "Continuous eloquence cloy;" that of Isocrates is too continuous, too perfect. It lacks the element of the unforeseen, the variety given by artless, sincere digressions, the vivid irregularity of passion. There is too much preparation in his faultless style. The defect comes from a morbid concern of the writer for his artistic glory — the concern of the virtuoso in language. One is vexed at finding a rhetorician where one is seeking to find a man. He himself avows that the peace of 346, between Athens and Philip, was made before he finished the oration in which he intended to advocate its measures.<sup>1</sup> He cannot sacrifice perfection of phrase to efficacy of political action. This injures his style without his knowing it. His vanity as an author often becomes evident in the most undisguised and artless manner. His orations are filled with his own praise. He sings his own eulogies, and occasionally repeats eulogies of himself made by others. He preaches to his rivals with an air of offensive self-sufficiency. In short, every form of literary vanity, even pedantry, is found in him. This secret fault hindered him from being the unequalled orator that he pretended to be.

Such are the merits and defects found in all his orations, with shades of difference due to time and circumstance. The differences are not really important, if one disregards certain works of his youth as being mere tentative essays. In the first period, extending from about 390 to 380, he undertook to treat in his own way the *παίγνιον*, that witticism so dear to the sophists. He composed eulogies of Helen and Busiris, trying to put into these paradoxes more seriousness than his predecessors had given them. The attempt could not be wholly successful. The two exhortations composed for Nicocles, king of Cyprus, belong to the same transition period, and are likewise works of the second order.

The series of great works begins in 380 with the *Panegyricus*. Isocrates read it at the Olympic festival. In it he celebrates Athens, demanding for her the hegemony against the Persians. It is one of his finest orations. The *Platæica*, doubtless published soon after the capture of Platæa by the Thebans in 373, has the form of a judicial discourse. The orator recounts for the Athenians the miseries they have suffered, and points out the injustice of the conquerors. Between 356 and 350, we have two orations that are deliberative. They are *On the Peace*, in which he sets forth his views on the sea-power of Attica; and the *Areopagitica*, in which he treats of the internal constitution of Athens. In the *Archidamius* he supposes that the Spartan king of that name lays before the

<sup>1</sup> Philip. 7.



senate of Lacedæmon the necessity of resistance to Thebes, which had conquered Sparta. In the *Antidosis* he pretends to defend himself in court against a certain Lysimachus, who really had brought a suit against him relative to a trierarchy. In it he presents to the Athenian public a complete picture of his life (354). In 346 he wrote *About Philip*, exhorting the king of Macedon to become the chief of the Greeks against the barbarians. Finally, in 339 he wrote the *Panathenæica*, in which he comes back again to eulogy of Athens as in the *Panegyricus*. He declares with emphasis that he no longer aims at the same splendor of eloquence as formerly; but it is difficult to see wherein his pretensions to simplicity are justified.

**8. His Theory of Education.**<sup>1</sup>—Oratory, in this sense, did not have as its sole object, in his thought, the composition of discourses; it was also a means of education. All thinking men, ever since the middle of the fifth century, acknowledged the need of adding to the elementary instruction given to children in regular schools a form of higher instruction suitable to prepare young men specifically for citizenship. Sophists and philosophers tried to solve the problem each in his own way. Public favor was divided between the purely practical rhetoric of the successors of Corax and Tisias, eristic, the reading of the poets, orations on various subjects, and the dialectic of the Socratic schools, each of which was a method of instruction. In an oration *Against the Sophists*, Isocrates, at the very beginning of his pedagogical career, made war upon the methods of his rivals, and extolled his own theory. The discourse is, unfortunately, mutilated. But if one adds the notices scattered by Isocrates in his other works, one sees that he had a carefully thought out and very definite system, largely original.

In his eyes, a man is not "well cultured" (*παιδευμένος*) who excels in a particular art or science; but he needs to possess sound judgment, a just and firm spirit, and complete control of himself.<sup>2</sup> These qualities are partly natural and partly the result of education. Some teach their pupils geometry, astronomy, and music: this is a useful education, but only preparatory. On the other hand, the pretended science of the ancient philosophers is nothing but contradiction and idle fancy. The explanation of the poets is difficult and rarely well done. The teachers of rhetoric mock at truth, and so are charlatans. Those of eristic and dialectic, though honest and sincere, entangle themselves in useless subtleties. Morals and politics are no field for rigorous science, in the Platonic sense of the term; on such subjects

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Girard, *L'Éducation athénienne au V<sup>e</sup> et au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 1889, p. 310 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Panathen.* 30-32.



there can be only opinions, good or bad. Hence it is on practical matters chiefly that instruction in true "philosophy" should be based. One must both construct a theory and make the application of it. The true philosopher, who is at the same time a professor of rhetoric, teaches his pupils by his own example, by the analysis of what he performs before them, and by the efforts which he causes them to make, to analyze and handle their ideas. He constrains them to write on serious subjects, just as he does. At the end of three or four years of theoretical and practical education, the young man may enter upon life trained to think and write. The last pages of the *Panathenica* propound in a most curious way what may be called the method of Isocrates. One of his auditors is supposed to be offended with certain of his opinions concerning Lacedæmon. A courteous discussion takes place, and Isocrates makes manifest the basis of his opinions. Thus he has given his pupils a lesson in history and politics in connection with one in style.

This method of education is too much like that now pursued not to make us sensible of the measure of truth it contains. Moreover, we must admit that, in practice, it will have always a value exactly proportional to the degree of scientific spirit which the teacher's personality can put into it. With Isocrates, it is to be feared that rhetoric, with its vagueness and unconscious deception, too often was given the first place.

On the whole, Isocrates has been very diversely judged. Cicero and his school admired him greatly; Fénelon found him unbearable. Indeed, there is in him both good and bad. (His greatest merit is that of having made possible the oratory of Demosthenes.) Unfortunately, he so charmed Greece by the music of his language that he often caused his successors to consider such music all-sufficient. In good and in evil, his influence was profound; and prose style after his time was usually different from what it had been before.<sup>1</sup>

**9. Political Oratory: General View.** — It is not until the middle of the fourth century, during the last twenty years of the life of Isocrates that strictly political oratory finally obtained its place in literature. Circumstances were then particularly favorable for its rise. It was the time when Macedon began to threaten Greece and Athens. A grave problem presented itself before the people: must Philip be

<sup>1</sup> Among the rivals of Isocrates, the only one that we need mention is Alcidas, whose curious oration, *On the Sophists*, we possess. He reproaches Isocrates with training men to be writers rather than orators. Yet even he felt the influence of his adversary. It was Alcidas who composed the elegant dictum cited by Aristotle: "All men are created free by Heaven; nature brings forth none to slavery." (Aristotle, *Rhet.* I, 13, with the scholium.) The text of Alcidas can be consulted in Bekker's *Attic Orators*; it is also edited by Blass, with his *Antiphon*.

regarded as an irreconcilable enemy or merely adroitly managed? A throng of orators arose to maintain each thesis. There was speaking before the assembly, speaking before the embassies; speaking, also, before the courts, to bring charges of accusation, or defend oneself against them. The political struggles, in Athenian practice, often had their epilogues in the courts. The tragic importance of such debates, however, would not have sufficed to create written political oratory, the only form belonging to literature, had not wholly new conditions then been brought about, for the first time, such as the existence of orators capable of finding their inspiration, pen in hand, and the existence of a public capable of reading written discourses with interest. Nothing is better known or oftener noticed than the difference between speaking well and writing well. Vehemence and animation, the very soul of political oratory, run the risk of extinction in the silent labor of the pen, unless, indeed, the pen write very vividly. On the other hand, what need is there of revising discourses, if they have already produced their effect on the rostrum and the public is not to read them. Demosthenes, in writing his political orations, performed more than the work of a man of letters; he proposed to extend and fortify the influence of his discourses.) Written discourse was for him a sort of journalism appropriate to Greek customs. But all the conditions favoring it were not found united until after long practice in the art by the logographers and by Isocrates—not until twenty or thirty years of political and philosophical discourses had accustomed both the orators and the public to employ the general ideas which form the basis of current politics, and to relish them in written form. Even in this period, not all the great orators wrote their speeches. Neither Phocion nor Demades left behind them anything but the recollection of their careers and demeanor on the rostrum, and a few words engraved, so to speak, on the memory of their contemporaries.<sup>1</sup> But from these words we can form no judgment, as they do not belong to literature proper. We must be content with saying that Phocion, the man whom Demosthenes called the “hatchet” of his orations,<sup>2</sup> spent his life bravely waging war as a general while advocating peace. He opposed the war party because he believed his countrymen incapable of making headway against Macedon. Hyperides asked him, one day, how soon he would be willing to advocate the war, and he replied: “I am waiting until the young men are willing to take the field, the rich to pay their war tax, and the orators to cease plundering the people.” He despised the rabble. One day,

<sup>1</sup> Some fragments of Demades can be found in Blass's edition of Dinarchus.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. X, 2.

when the people applauded him, he turned about toward his friends and asked: "Is it some foolishness I have uttered?" Demades, the son of a boatman, without education or manners, is the very opposite of this severe, haughty aristocrat, and his brief, cutting eloquence. The two have no common trait but that of having opposed Demosthenes. Demades was in the pay of Macedon, and did not conceal the fact. He was a drinker, a high liver, an idler, and a matchless improviser. Plutarch pretends, and not improbably, that his improvised discourse, so full of spirit, imagination, and wit, often carried away like a torrent the carefully formed periods of Demosthenes. Among the orators who wrote their speeches, none confined himself strictly to political oratory. Several were logographers as well as politicians, and most of them wrote on politics only for judicial debates.<sup>1</sup> Yet politics was their principal source of inspiration, and this is their novel feature. Demosthenes and Æschines, Hyperides and Lycurgus, notwithstanding the diversity of their works, are essentially political. Pen in hand, they were all great orators, clever in the management of general ideas and the mastery of words. What caused differences of degree between them is even more a matter of genius than of talent.

**10. Demosthenes; his Life and Career.**<sup>2</sup>—Demosthenes is undoubtedly the chief among this group of writers. He towers high above all the others, owing to an excellence of political oratory which makes him perhaps the greatest political speaker of all time.

He was born at Athens in 384, in the deme of Pæania. At seven, he lost his father, a rich manufacturer of arms, who left the children a considerable heritage. Faithless guardians wasted it. The delicate orphan was brought up with a younger sister by their mother. At eighteen he came of age, and finding himself grown to manhood,

<sup>1</sup> We have, indeed, in the way of regular political addresses reduced to writing, only those of Demosthenes, and two or three others incorporated with his works, but of unknown origin.

<sup>2</sup> **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Complete editions by Reiske, Bekker, and Baiter and Sauppe in their *Oratores Attici*; by Vömel (Didot Collection, 1843); and by Dindorf-Blass, Teubner, 1885. The *Philippics* and leading political orations by H. Weil, Paris, Hachette, 1873-1886. Nine *Philippics* by Rehdantz-Blass, Teubner, 1890-1893; *Select Private Orations*, by Paley and Sandys, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1886; *Leptines*, by Sandys, Cambridge, 1890; *De Corona*, with notes and essays, by W. W. Goodwin, Cambridge, University Press, 1901.

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Consult: A. Schäfer, *Demosthenes und seine Zeit*, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1856-1858, a splendid work; and vol. III of Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit*; L. Bredif, *L'Éloquence politique en Grèce*, Paris, Hachette, 1886; Butcher, *Demosthenes*, New York, Appleton, 1882.



resolved, though still in feeble health, that he would obtain justice. Three years were spent in parley and preliminary discussions. Meanwhile he studied oratory and politics in the school of Isæus. When the matter came before the courts, in 363, he pleaded his own case, and showed himself a great orator. He won; but renewed pettifoggery obliged him to come into court again. He did not achieve his purpose for two or three years, when he won definitively, though he was almost ruined. He had only the advantage of being prepared henceforth for any judicial action whatsoever.

Tradition has it that he was attracted to the rostrum early in life, but that, at first, all his efforts failed: his voice was weak, his pronunciation indistinct, his gestures inadequate. But an old man who had heard Pericles told the young aspirant that no one reminded him more of that great orator; and the tragedian Satyrus offered to give him lessons in elocution. Demosthenes, with his stubborn will, undertook to remodel this nature. One reads in Plutarch the well-known but partly legendary account of the exercises he practised to attain his end: the pebbles he took into his mouth to force himself to pronounce well, his discourses spoken in the face of boisterous waves, and the grotto where he shut himself in for work. At the same time he studied the poets and prose-writers, and especially the orators. He familiarized himself with poetry; and though we need not believe that, with his own hands, he copied Thucydides entire eight times, as was reported by later accounts, yet it is certain that he read that author carefully and with profit.

• As he was obliged to earn a livelihood, he became a logographer. It was an excellent apprenticeship in public affairs, and a means of studying politics. Three of his oldest political pleas, *Against Androtion* (355), *Against Timocrates*, and *Against Aristocrates* (352), were written by him in the capacity of a logographer. He practised that profession a long time; for even as late as 345, Æschines reproached him with composing speeches for others and teaching pupils. Probably he renounced this altogether only when he was about to come into power, in 344 or 343.

He had not waited till then to deal with politics proper. In 355 or 354 he figured as auxiliary (*συνήγορος*) of the prosecution in the political trial against Leptines, which proves that his reputation was no longer confined to the narrow circle of private interests. His oration *On the Symmories* (354) and that *For the Megalopolitans* (353) are real harangues. Two years later, in 351, he composed the *First Philippic*. He was then but thirty-two years old, though already in full possession of his powers. His great political career had begun.

It naturally divides into three periods. In the first, from 351 to



340, he is an orator of the opposition. The peace party is in power, and he struggles against it tenaciously, except for a few temporary efforts at reconciliation, due to patriotism. It is the period of the great political discourses that slowly established his reputation and brought him to the first rank. In the second period, from 340 to 338, he is the chief of the party in power. He directs the struggle against Philip, and no longer writes his orations. Perhaps the time for doing so was wanting; and besides, having the ear of the assembly, he no longer felt the need of doing so. In the last period, after the battle of Chæronea had reduced Athens to inactivity, the rostrum no longer gave him occasion to exhort the people. He belonged to the vanquished party, and was without hope of changing the course of affairs, particularly after the appearance of Alexander and the ruin of Thebes. All he could do was to defend himself against the attacks of his enemies, first in the trial for the crown, where he triumphed over Æschines (330), and then in the sad affair of Harpalus (324), when he was defeated. The affair of the crown originated in a decree passed on the proposition of Ctesiphon in 337, after the battle of Chæronea, to award to Demosthenes a golden crown as a national vote of thanks for the patriotism with which he had spent part of his fortune in restoring the fortifications of Athens. The author of the decree was immediately accused by Æschines of illegal procedure; but the matter could not then come before the courts, owing to political events. Philip was assassinated in 336; and Demosthenes, notwithstanding the recent death of his daughter, appeared in public crowned with flowers. The joy of the patriots was short; Demosthenes had persuaded the Thebans to take up arms anew, but the swiftness of Alexander thwarted the efforts of the Greeks. Thebes was taken and destroyed; ten Athenian orators, including Demosthenes and Lycurgus, were to be delivered to the king of Macedon, and were saved only by the intervention of Demades. When Alexander had gone to Asia, Athens was again able to deal with her domestic troubles and the process of the crown was finally terminated. It was the strife of two political parties, not merely that of two orators. An immense crowd came from every quarter to be present. Æschines was defeated and left Athens, never to return. Demosthenes was again triumphant. On the contrary, the very obscure affair of Harpalus was a disaster. Harpalus was a commissary of Alexander at Susa. When his master appeared to be lost in the depths of India, he profited by his absence to plunder the royal treasury. When Alexander reappeared, Harpalus fled with five thousand talents and six thousand men, came to Athens, and requested that the city receive him. The over-enthusiastic patriots

seconded the request; but Demosthenes brought about its rejection. Harpalus then disbanded his troops and came to Athens as a suppliant. The city received him. Immediately Alexander demanded his extradition. Demosthenes obtained a decree by which, before the trial occurred, the fugitive should be put in prison, and his money deposited on the Acropolis. A little time after, Harpalus escaped, and it was noticed that half of the money had disappeared. Demosthenes, who had been one of the commissioners appointed to keep guard, became the object of the most furious attacks. The friends of Macedon united with the patriots against him. He was accused of taking bribes, and condemned to pay a fine of fifty talents. Not being able to raise so enormous a sum, he was put in prison; but he was not long in making his escape. The next year Alexander died (323). The national party, in its joy, forgot its earlier troubles, and Demosthenes came back in triumph. Already the Greek cities were preparing to throw off the yoke of Macedon. An Athenian army marched to meet Antipater. It was crushed at Crannon (322). After that all was lost. Demosthenes, proscribed by Antipater, reached the island of Calauria. He was followed, and found in the temple of Poseidon. There he brought a poisoned dagger to his mouth, and then, advancing a few steps toward the soldiers, he fell dead (322). One may say literally that, after having been for thirty years the most dangerous adversary of Macedon, he took with him to the tomb the liberty of Athens and of Greece.

Under his name, we have sixty orations, besides a collection of exordiums and six letters. This is the larger part of what the ancients possessed. However, it is not all authentic. About twenty orations, chiefly civil pleas, must be rejected as certainly apocryphal, or at least doubtful. Yet the works which are above suspicion form a considerable body, enabling us to know the author as a statesman and as an orator. There are harangues, political orations, and civil orations among them. Of the last, which belong to the first period of his life, we shall say but little; for, whatever their merit or interest, it is not as a logographer that we can really know Demosthenes.

**11. Pleas of Demosthenes in Civil Cases.** — Yet there are important differences among those orations that can be grouped together as civil pleas. Certain orations composed against his guardians, Aphobus and Onetor, form a class by themselves. Here he did not act as a logographer, but spoke in his own name, without veil of any sort; and, if it is not yet his whole power that he reveals, it is at least a characteristic portrait of himself, with many of the essential features of his moral nature and even of his genius. These five ora-

tions pertain to three distinct affairs, of which the last two spring successively from the first. They are made up of an exposition of facts and some discussion. The exposition is minute and precise, like the later study of ways and means in the harangues. There is nothing of the sycophant or the fine writer in them. The discussion is logical and clever; the style sober, aiming to convince rather than to excite, and fully animate at times with passion, even in the midst of argument. If the youth of the orator is anywhere evident, it is in the perorations, which are somewhat fuller in words and stylistic effects than those of the later period. What is chiefly noticeable is the serious depth of soul in the young man, his violent, passionate will, and the vigorous intelligence that he reveals from the first.

The other pleas which have been preserved belong to a considerably later period. They are contemporary with the first political orations. He was then enjoying his full reputation as a logographer, and some of these pleas are real masterpieces of their kind. Sometimes we have striking pictures of Athenian life, as in the plea *For Phormio*, that concise history of a family of bankers, in which, in the first generation, a barbarian slave, ill able to talk Greek, yet intelligent and honest, is freed by his master, associated with him in his affairs, and made by marriage a member of his family. Then the children, who are born in luxury, are forgetful of their origin, and become insolent and debauched. In the plea *Against Conon*, we have the story of the misadventures of a good though timid man, left, during his military service, to the mercy of a band of wretches, who were his comrades. We find the same thing in the amusing discussion of two neighbors in the country (*Against Callicles*), each of whom wished that a stream of water, having the public road as its bed, and transformed into a torrent by every heavy rain, should overflow the other's property. There is in all this a cleverness and charm which one is almost astonished to find in Demosthenes. One seems at times to be reading Lysias or Isæus. Nothing shows better how imperious were the rules of oratorical composition. One feels what a rigorous gymnastic exercise it was for the future orator to compel his stubborn nature to adapt itself readily thereto. But one sees also why it is not in these orations that we find Demosthenes at his best.

**12. His Political Oratory; his Characteristics as an Orator and a Statesman.** — The real Demosthenes, in the eyes of posterity, is the orator who, for thirty years, kept up the combat against Macedon, and was, as it were, the last great incarnation of patriotism in Athens. His oratory is the voice of a heroic spirit, taking up and sustaining its cause with incomparable skill. Hence its unequalled

literary beauty, which cannot be properly appreciated without studying all its component elements.

The cause which he defended was this. In the middle of the fourth century, Greece as a whole was in anarchy and confusion. In the presence of cities mutually hostile and powerless, Thessaly, and then Macedon, grew strong and sought to assume the hegemony left vacant. Athens needed to decide whether she should let events follow their course, or reassume her former rank. Each policy had its partisans. The friends of the let-alone policy, of peace at any price, were of different sorts: pessimists like Phocion, who despised their contemporaries; high-minded, but chimerical spirits like Isocrates, who saw no danger except from Persia; adventurers like Demades and Æschines, who found it to their interest to become the advocates of Macedon; and financiers like Eubulus, who feared for the city the heavy expenses of the war. The strength of the party lay in the general fondness for comfort, the hatred of military service, the sluggish optimism of the multitudes, and the lassitude engendered by the numerous failures of the policy of ambition. Other men, on the contrary, had a very different ideal; they could not conceive of an Athens lacking liberty, high ideals, or purpose. They pictured in the triumph of Macedon the ruin of the national life; they wished Athens to continue worthy of her past, to seek alliances, and particularly to cultivate friendship with Thebes, or even with Persia, whom they regarded as much less dangerous than Philip. They wished her to be ready for active service at any cost. Between the two policies, Demosthenes did not hesitate. He maintained ardently the policy of action; and after sixteen years of striving he persuaded his countrymen. But his policy failed; it met its doom at the battle of Chæronea. Does it follow that the cause was bad, and Demosthenes wrong in sustaining it? No. Macedon was victorious only because both Philip and Alexander were men of talent, and because the latter, at the age of twenty, proved to be a statesman of the first order. Who can say what would have happened if Philip had died some years earlier, or Athens been sustained by an Epaminondas? The greatest misfortune Athens could incur in following the policy of Demosthenes was that of succumbing with honor. In following that of Æschines and Phocion, she was quite as sure of being conquered without honor; for there was no room by the side of Philip for an independent city. Men say sometimes that the interests of civilization were furthered by the victory of Macedon and the diffusion of Greek culture through the Orient. This may be true, but Demosthenes had no such problem to consider. He was in the situation of a general, who cannot ask him-



self, without thinking a crime, whether the enemy represents a superior form of civilization. His duty is narrowly circumscribed and imperious—to defeat the enemy, if possible; or if not, to struggle to the end. This he did; but by an unforeseen necessity, the defeat of his policy ended in the advancement of the cause of civilization. In doing his duty, he enhanced the moral patrimony of Greece, the very substance of that civilization which was to be diffused. Greece would have been less majestic if Athens had not fought at Chæronea. Furthermore, the cause was just and good in principle; the only question was whether he would be able to display in its defence the qualities of a statesman, or merely use, in the advocacy of his tenets, the jargon of a demagogue.

The question was a grave one. There is a way of defending the noblest causes which compromises and hinders them. The party of great, sonorous, hollow words, vain and ineffective demonstrations, and rodomontades dispensing with activity, or rendering all reasonable activity impossible, existed at Athens in close proximity to Demosthenes. His merit is that he never joined it, never ceased to distinguish himself from it by word and deed, struggled against it at the peril of his reputation when necessary, quite regardless of his peace, and almost of his life. For flourishes of patriotism, in the end, were his worst enemies. He was a statesman, the greatest politician in Athens at the time. As such, he had a well-tempered character, an intelligence idealistic in its general views, positive and realistic in the appreciation of the possible, and in the choice of means for attaining the end. He spoke nobly, time and again, on the conception he had of his function. The orator is the counsellor of the people (*σύμβουλος*). The wise counsellor is the opposite of the sycophant or the demagogue; above all else, he is unselfish, courageous, frank. He fears not to speak the truth, even at the risk of displeasing. The counsel he should give is not the easiest, but the best.<sup>1</sup> It is not enough that the orator be frank; he must be intelligent, and that, too, in politics. If he be mistaken, he must bear the odium of his faults; he has no right to be incapable or ignorant; for no one asked him to be a statesman.<sup>2</sup>

The conduct of Demosthenes was in accord with his theory. He was bold in speech and always ready to lead others and meet responsibilities. He did not fear causing displeasure; but struck prejudice and selfishness square in the face, and reprimanded his audience with friendly severity. He even resisted his own party; and this, for a statesman, is the height of courage. His policy was inspired with lofty principles. In his eyes it was to the interest of

<sup>1</sup> *De Cherson.* 69-72.

<sup>2</sup> *Embassy*, 100.

Athens to sustain her honor and remain faithful to her traditional character (her *ἦθος*), which brought her always to aid the feeble, combat tyrants, and champion the rights of Greece (*τὰ κοινὰ δίκαια τῶν Ἑλλήνων*). He took a lofty view of things, and was not ignorant that apparent interest, apart from justice and honor, is generally an illusion. He inherited the philosophic spirit of Pericles and Thucydides. But his elevation is far from being mystical, his philosophy far from superficial. The great defender of Athenian honor was well versed in history and the specific facts of exact political science. No other orator of his time so abounded in positive allusions, in proofs based on actual events. No other was more indifferent to the old legends so dear to Isocrates and Æschines. This marvellous interpreter of general truths never shrank from technical, minute detail. His knowledge of men and things was ample and far-reaching. He did not cease with externals: he knew comprehensively the wiles of Philip, his activity, his ambition; the noble or weak tendencies of Athens; and the moral misery of Sparta and Thebes. If certain measures commended themselves, he did not use vague phrases, but set forth figures and minute specifications. He loved questions of business. This idealist reformed the Athenian financial system; this great advocate of political justice entered with zest into the accounts of men, horses, ships, and money contributions.

Yet the hatred of his adversaries brought against him grave accusations. He was charged with laxity, improbity as a logographer, and venality as a statesman. The echo of these calumnies is heard in the historians of antiquity. A word about them is, accordingly, in place, though we would not do more honor to such attacks than they deserve. Æschines reproaches him with having trembled before Philip in the embassy of 346, and with having spoken little. If the statement is true, it may easily be explained by reasons more serious and honorable than that of childish fear. Others blamed him for having fled at Chæroneæ; but the city as a whole had no such opinion, since he was chosen to deliver the funeral oration for those who perished on the field of battle. His pretended improbity as a logographer rests only upon a ridiculous insinuation of Æschines and a gross misrepresentation of Plutarch. Lastly, his venality is no better established, notwithstanding his condemnation in the affair of Harpalus; for the year after, the whole city, including his most bitter adversaries, received him in triumph. This does not mean, surely, that he was a saint; great politicians rarely are that, and ancient Greece was far from furnishing exceptions to the rule. Current public opinion, too, was very liberal regarding the legitimacy of certain

gains allowed to orators and generals. That Demosthenes, according to the usage of his time, drew from politics profits then thought legitimate, is possible, if not proved; that he employed imprudently, in the interests of his cause, part of the money of Harpalus, is much less certain; but even supposing these things true, it would not be an inexcusable act, dishonoring a statesman. We can and must affirm that we have no evidence allowing us to assert his improbity; and that the furious attacks of his enemies have all the air of being the response of bad faith to the eloquent outcry which he never ceased to make on the evils Greece met with, owing to the venality of the orators. It would really be childish to take literally, as established facts, these flimsy arguments of the rostrum, which were in such general use.

His oratory expresses perfectly his ardent, imperious nature, both generous and intelligent, both idealistic and positive. To-day we speak of his oratory, and mean his written orations. What was he on the rostrum? As a rule, he prepared his speeches thoroughly; for Pytheas, an adversary, reproaches them with smelling of the lamp. Plutarch, the echo of Æschines, and Demades often speak of his laborious periods. In the beginning, at any rate, the statement seems to have some foundation; later it is certain that his action was vehement and even fiery, and this excludes the idea of simple recitation. Æschines mocks at his cries and furious agitation, calling him a tawny beast. Demosthenes, speaking of oratorical gifts, made action of prime importance. It is, then, undeniable that, on the rostrum, he produced the strongest impression possible, and, as an orator of the first order, made every effort to do so. We cannot now judge of the matter for ourselves; for it is evident that, in writing the oration after or before the public delivery, he could not have written it exactly as it was spoken. But with this exception, we must say that the extraordinary merit of his oratory consists in having, more than any other, the atmosphere of life. Never has written eloquence preserved more of the ardor, or the flexible intonation, of discourse that is majestically strong and clever, noted down when it still glows with the passionate fervor of a splendid delivery. One can say, in a word, that the substance of his oratory, like that of his political genius, is action, not parade or literary vanity. All he says aims at an end, which is to control men and lead them whither he chooses. All his cleverness as a writer tends only to portray with faithfulness his pungent energy as an orator, his dominating will, his lofty, practical views as a statesman. Fénelon, in his *Lettre à l'Académie française*, has said this with exquisite justice; and we should need here only to recall his words, if it were

not our duty, in a more technical analysis of the facts, to seek the manner and the reason of his methods of procedure.

His language, like that of Lysias or Isocrates, is purely Attic, the spoken Attic of his time, without admixture of archaic or poetic forms. But within the domain of ordinary words, his choice is varied. He does not fear the familiar, nor even the trivial, more than the sublime. If he creates new words, they are words of passion, such as the popular language was creating constantly, but never literary words. Bold metaphors, picturesque images, passionate hyperboles, illuminate and warm his style. They are full of life, and arranged in the freest order, the order most in conformity with the movement of his imagination. Nothing resembles less the fine but icy regularity of Isocrates. It resembles more the vigorous freedom of Thucydides, when divested of his stiffness and obscurity. There is the same variety, the same movement of thought—now short, rough, breathless, now long and ample, when the flood of sentiments and ideas carries it, so to speak, beyond the finite. The uniform mould has disappeared with the rules of the schools. No labor could be more fruitless than to try cataloguing the forms and rhythms in the periods of Demosthenes. The only rule he followed was that of following none. His period is the very image of his soul. It is highly rhythmical, with the rhythm of command and will, which emphasizes a particular word and then hastens to its goal. He is a man of action and of passion. He neither dreams nor soars, but handles serious ideas with vigor and unites them into a solid whole. Yet he carefully avoids hiatus, like a true pupil of Isocrates. Isocrates had, however, so changed the grammar of oratory on this point that hiatus had become almost a solecism. It has been noted that Demosthenes refrained from the accumulation of short syllables; but it may have been undesignedly, because, with the instinct of a great artist, he felt a discord between the effect of bounding lightness produced by many short syllables and the stark ruggedness which forms the substance of his inspiration.

And so, since he speaks to persuade, not to amuse or dazzle, reasoning is the very soul of his eloquence. His language is remarkable for moderation, clearness, unforeseen surprises, tenacity, passion, and commanding tone. He readily presents his thesis in the form of paradox, for he knows that paradox excites attention. But one sees immediately that only the appearance is paradoxical, and that the substance of the idea is lucid good sense. He knows that it is not enough to present an idea to the public superficially, in order to make it penetrate men's minds, but that it is necessary to emphasize it by blow upon blow. It must be repeated to impress intelligence and



memory. He excels, like Pascal, in treating an idea in all its phases, until even the dullest of his auditors is forced to understand. At every instant he challenges them, warning them to listen. He represents them as engaged in lively discussions. All moves; all is animated. No one is less a sophist. He did, indeed, compose occasional sophisms, especially when his prejudices carried him away; but it was not the natural turn of his mind to mould his sentences into forms of quibbling and subtlety. He took up questions rather in their broader aspects and treated them with bold frankness. His dialectic is thoroughly reasonable.

The need of conviction is so urgent in him, so constantly present in his thought, that it dominates every part of his oratory and lends it a profoundly eloquent character. If he tells a story, it is never for the mere pleasure of the telling, but to establish the facts of which he has need. He has some admirable narratives; for example, the capture of Elatea in the oration *On the Crown*,<sup>1</sup> or the progress of Philip in the oration *On the Chersonesus*.<sup>2</sup> These are short, consisting merely of a few energetic sentences thoroughly incorporated with the argument. The same is true of the portraits or the character sketches, so abundant and expressive in the *Philippics*. They are never declamations; but are charges against Philip or Æschines and warnings to Athens. Hence in the arrangement of the parts of the oration, there is often an apparent complexity which has caused scholars embarrassment: after a brief exordium, at once forcibly commanding attention, he treats successively, in two or three paragraphs, clear and simple in subject-matter, the two or three essential ideas he wishes to present; but, as he keeps always before his eyes the goal toward which he advances, he never ceases, on the way, to keep his conclusion vividly before his auditors. This occasionally deranges the order of the traditional divisions so dear to the rhetoricians. The whole may seem less neat, perhaps, than the work of other orators, such as Æschines or Isocrates, who aim above all at beauty of the façade. But Demosthenes was willing to forego the elegance and polish of their diction, if only he could influence his auditors and force them to obey.

It has been said at times that he was wanting in spirit. This is true, if one refers to the gay subtlety of thought which amuses itself with pleasing inventions like those found, for example, in Æschines or Cicero. Demosthenes is too passionate to care for spirit of that order. He lacks certain agreeable qualities, such as sweetness, grace, or witty amiability. But if one desires the spirit that can win, biting sarcasm or glowing warmth, he has more of it than any one else.

<sup>1</sup> *De Cor.* 169.

<sup>2</sup> *De Cherson.* 61-67.

What makes him the most remarkable orator in all literature is the incredible movement of a thought that is always serious, yet always in ebullition, in which sentiments apparently the most diverse, everything from jesting sportiveness to religious gravity, from rude triviality to the sublimest eloquence, press upon each other, succeed each other, mingle together in a burst of passion that carries all before it.

**13. His Most Important Orations. Conclusion.** — It would be difficult to make a choice among so many orations almost equally beautiful. With their diversity, they present always nearly the same characteristics, those of the orator's innate genius. The group of harangues proper comprises the *First Philippic* (351), the three *Olynthiacs* (349-348), the oration *On the Peace* (346), the *Second Philippic*, the oration *On the Chersonesus* (341), and in the same year the *Third Philippic*. The group of the great political pleas of his maturity includes that *Against Midias* (348), the accusation against Æschines in the oration *On the Embassy* (343), and the defence of Ctesiphon in the oration *On the Crown* (330). These are all of the first order. The bold and sensible oration *On the Peace*, that *On the Chersonesus*, in which the particular matter of Diopithes is so boldly put aside to make place for the examination of the general state of things, the *Third Philippic*, with its penetrating melancholy, yet obstinate energy, contrast by various merits with the *First Philippic*, whose optimism is so confident and imperious. The oration *Against Midias*, despite the sometimes disagreeable bitterness of an intense personal hatred, is full of admirable feeling for the necessity of the reign of law in a democracy. The oration *On the Embassy* is a marvel of fire and irresistible argument. Perhaps, however, the oration *On the Crown* gives the completest and most exalted idea of his genius. Whence comes the incomparable beauty of the speech? It is principally moral. It comes from the fact that nowhere has the orator's magnanimity nor his indomitable courage and heroic optimism been more completely revealed. The judicial thesis is questionable, if not feeble. It seems that Æschines was right in theory, but that Ctesiphon had some precedents in his favor. But if the judicial thesis is subject to discussion, the political and moral thesis, besides being true, is really sublime. "I have done all I could to save Athens," says Demosthenes; "it is only our fortune and our traitors who have destroyed us. But there are noble defeats, just as there are noble deaths. Even after the defeat, you have nothing to regret; you have done your duty. That is the essential thing. No, you have not failed, Athenians; I swear it by the dead on the plain of Marathon." This is the dominant idea of the speech,

constituting its soul, its unity. All the merits of the author's style are found in the oration; it is useless to repeat them. Let us be content with mentioning a few of its most celebrated passages, that the admiration of all ages has consecrated, as it were, and that it is trite to quote, when so many historians of oratory have quoted them. Among such passages are that on the capture of Elatea, or the oath sworn by the heroes of Marathon, whose general sense and import we have just given.

The effect produced by this oratory on his contemporaries is clearly indicated by several passages of Æschines. He has noted with malevolence, yet justly, despite himself, the powerful vigor of his rival. Later, in the diversity of the rhetorical schools, the admiration of the masters seems to hesitate whether to assign the first rank to Demosthenes or to one of several others. But from the time of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the primacy of Demosthenes was undisputed. In modern times, Cicero, being better known and more academic, has certainly been better relished in general until the present generation. In the seventeenth century, only Fénelon spoke of the Greek orator with full appreciation of his genius. To-day the whole world recognizes in Demosthenes the greatest political orator of all time. No other shows better by his example that in oratory — and we may say more generally, in all the arts — the supreme grandeur is that which joins to technical perfection the *pectus* of the artist, that is to say, his soul.

14. *Æschines*.<sup>1</sup> — Demosthenes's rival, Æschines, notwithstanding the brilliance of his career and his indisputable talent, is really a much inferior character, who must not occupy us long. His intellectual and moral nature is thoroughly mediocre, and it is only the brilliant pretentiousness of his speeches which has given him historical and literary importance.

He was born at Athens in 390, and was of humble origin. His father, Atrometus, was an athlete, a mercenary soldier, and a school-master in succession. His mother was a *τελέστρια*; that is, she practised religious initiations. Without accepting literally all the accounts of Demosthenes, it is certain that neither the infancy of Æschines nor his young manhood had prepared him for a political career. To earn his living, he became the secretary of certain

<sup>1</sup> BIBLIOGRAPHY: Editions by Schutz (Teubner), Weidner (Berlin, Weidmann), Gwatkin and Shuckburgh (London, 1890; with a good commentary), and Richardson, Boston, 1889. Critical edition by Blass, Teubner, 1896.

French translation by Stievenart in the volume with his Demosthenes. English translation of the oration *Against Ctesiphon*, by Biddle, Philadelphia, 1881.

Consult: Castets, *Æschine l'orateur*, Paris, 1872.

inferior magistrates, then an actor. The friendship of Aristophon of Azenia probably secured his nomination as registrar of the popular assembly. Then he attached himself to Eubulus, the head of the peace party. About 350 he married, and the marriage seemed to have secured him a revenue again; his wife's brothers were in a well-to-do condition. It is only in 348 that he seems to have decided to be an orator. He was then among the adversaries of Philip. But he soon changed opinions, and never after ceased to combat with extreme violence the policy of Demosthenes. In 346 he was one of the embassy of Philostratus appointed to negotiate a peace; and it is with reference to this that Demosthenes brought an accusation against him in 343. A majority of thirty votes acquitted him. In 339 he was *pylagorus* of the Amphictyonic Council. A criminal, or else inept, proposition of his gave Philip a pretext for intervening as the avenger of the god of Delphi. Hence the capture of Elatea, and the war which ended with the battle of Chæronea. Immediately after that, Ctesiphon proposed to award Demosthenes a crown of gold in the theatre, and Æschines accused Ctesiphon of illegal procedure. The process came before the courts in 330. Æschines did not obtain a fifth part of the votes, and chose voluntary exile in preference to the heavy fine that he would need to pay. He retired to Asia Minor, and perhaps also to Rhodes, to practise the profession of a sophist by giving oratorical readings. A celebrated anecdote, though little worthy of credence, represents him as one day reading before his pupils the two orations of the suit concerning the crown, that of Demosthenes and his own. At this point, the forms of the legend vary. According to some, when his disciples were astonished that the oration had not triumphed over that of Demosthenes, he said, "It is because you have not heard the monster (*τὸ θηρίον*) himself." According to others, the admiration of the disciples for the speech of his rival convinced Æschines himself, who cried out: "What would you think, if you had heard the monster himself?"<sup>1</sup>

Was Æschines really a traitor, as Demosthenes keeps saying even to satiety? There is no doubt that he received from Philip gifts of land in Boeotia and in Macedon. We can show from his own speeches that he denied his relations with Philip even while he was the guest of Alexander.<sup>2</sup> All this is equivocal and suspicious. The best one can say, perhaps, to clear him is that the mediocrity of his political genius may have blinded him to the consequences of certain of his acts. He boasts, for example, with strange simplicity, in 330, of the part that he played in 339 in the Amphic-

<sup>1</sup> Cic. *De Orat.* III, 56.

<sup>2</sup> In *Ctes.* 66.



tyonic Council,<sup>1</sup> and does not then seem to suspect that he was the cause of the baleful war of 338. In all his orations, it is impossible to seize upon a serious political idea, or a just notion of contemporary affairs. He is a parvenu, a frivolous person who, though humble in origin, is very proud of the high rank he has attained in the party of the rich aristocrats. He is proud of his success as a man of letters and an itinerant playwright. He is happy in having a fine voice, a commanding presence, a noble appearance on the rostrum, an imperturbable facility in improvisation. He had received compliments from Philip and took pleasure in repeating them: the man who was able to appreciate him so well must himself be great. Demosthenes, on the contrary, was odious; he pursued the great orator with the hatred of a jealous politician and man of letters. He mocked at his cries, his violent gestures, and the labor he spent in finishing his style.

We have only three of the orations of Æschines: an accusation, full of hatred and venom, against a certain Timarchus, the political ally of Demosthenes; his defence in the matter of the Embassy; and his plea *Against Ctesiphon*. These are the only ones that he wrote; for he was not a logographer by profession, and improvised his political orations. It was evidently with the design of propagandism that he wrote the three discourses we possess.

His oratory, though devoid of the help of his sonorous voice and other superficial gifts, is brilliant and pretty, yet with the essential defects due to his nature. These are not such as appear at once and as can compromise, even before a casual reader, the immediate success of the orations. It is only on reflection that one sees how many political views this political eloquence lacks, how much the support of history and of reflection upon experience is wanting, how vague it is, what misuse it makes of personal attacks, vicious, cold hatred, impudent falsehood, and frivolous calumny, all the resources which folly obtains from vice, and which find an assured echo in the malignity of an audience. By the side of these defects, which only attention reveals, there are brilliant merits that appear at once. The reader is charmed before he has had time to reflect. The narrowness and baseness of the thought is concealed beneath external dignity, elegant manners, grace, and harmony. Æschines has always on his lips the eulogy of *εὐκοσμία*, good order in public and private life. He knows how to speak of himself with the dignity of decency, and of his parents with a respect that may be sincere.<sup>2</sup> If he is a mediocre politician, he is a good lawyer, knowing well the content of the law, because of having been at one time a

<sup>1</sup> In *Ctes.* 119-121.

<sup>2</sup> On the *Embassy*, 147 ff.

recorder. He discusses the law with confidence, and can arrange as well as any one fine phrases on the importance of official documents and on the usefulness of the archives that preserve them for posterity.<sup>1</sup> But it is principally in form that his oratory is meritorious.) In this respect it need scarcely fear comparison. We must put aside, of course, that of Demosthenes, as unparalleled. But with this one exception, it would be difficult to find a type more seductive than that of Æschines. Its rhetoric is admirable, clear, abundant, varied, affecting, witty, at times gracefully left without polish, yet always in perfect order. Its lucid clearness is its chief merit. The sentences, without being balanced like those of Isocrates or logical like those of Demosthenes, are stately, easy to follow, and alive with the spirit of eloquence. There is the same clearness in his narratives as in his discussions. All the elements of every oration partake of this quality. Nothing is without its purpose. The orations are of moderate length, fully a third shorter than the corresponding ones of Demosthenes, and always constructed on a simple plan. It is easy to see their arrangement at a glance. His clearness is not cold. He interests us continuously. He makes us wish with every paragraph that we knew what is to follow. In this well-ordered plan, he spreads, with harmonious prodigality, the greatest variety of colors. The fundamental tone of his oratory is elegant gravity, resembling at times that of Isocrates, or that of the poets whom he loves to cite. Upon this basis he builds vigorous or witty constructions. His force is no less remarkable than his dignity, and is always accompanied with charm. His manner is above all persuasive, and adopts every form of expression. Sometimes the subtlety of the idea is rendered by a characteristic word; sometimes it is spread over an entire sentence; very often, by a form of ingenuity in which he differs most from Demosthenes, the subtlety is prolonged through a lengthy narrative, which it seems to light with a delicate smile, making it pleasing and graceful, even pungent, though not sarcastic. He possesses the gayety that Demosthenes lacks. He has a vivid word and turn with his lightness.<sup>2</sup> Faulty rhetoric, pretentious and cold, is not wholly absent: the invocation to the Earth, the Sun, Intelligence, and Education, in the peroration of the speech *Against Ctesiphon* is an example. But it is very rare, almost exceptional. On the whole, few men have been better endowed with the external and technical qualities necessary in oratory; what he needed was loftier thought and greater honesty of heart.

<sup>1</sup> In *Ctes.* 75.

<sup>2</sup> Examples abound. Suffice it to mention, in the oration *On the Embassy*, the clever tale of the embarrassment of Demosthenes, mute before Philip, 34-35.

15. Hyperides.<sup>1</sup> — Among the orators who, in the struggles against Macedon, took sides with Demosthenes, the most eloquent by far was Hyperides. Some even preferred him to the great master. The error — for it is one — is excusable, as Hyperides possessed qualities of the first order, as an orator at least, if not as a statesman.

He was born in 389, five years before Demosthenes. His family was in easy circumstances. He is said to have been a pupil of Isocrates, and also of Plato, but the latter is scarcely probable. Like Demosthenes, he was at first a logographer. The profession enriched him and made possible the voluptuous life which seems to have been one of the necessary conditions of his happiness. Yet it did not diminish his activity. From the year 360 he began to take part in politics. He immediately became the ally of Demosthenes, and one of the chiefs of the war party. After the battles of Chæronea, it was he who proposed the necessary measures of defence; and later, when Demades accused him of illegal procedure in the matter, he replied in these celebrated words: "The arms of Macedon prevented me from taking note of the laws. . . . It is not I who caused the decree to be passed: it is Chæronea." Toward the middle of Alexander's reign, serious differences separated him from Demosthenes. The latter regarded the cause of independence as irrevocably lost and advocated a policy of prudence. Hyperides seems to have continued to favor the war. When Harpalus came to demand the support of Athens, Hyperides seconded the demand, and was opposed by Demosthenes. Harpalus had been imprisoned on the Acropolis, and after his flight, Hyperides was among the foremost accusers of Demosthenes. The year after, however, the death of Alexander reconciled them. Hyperides carried a measure for war against Antipater. But Macedon, victorious at Crannon, demanded the chiefs of the party of resistance. Hyperides was obliged to flee like Demosthenes, but was also captured by Archias. He was straightway condemned. It is said that, when put to torture, he bit off his own tongue to make sure of saying nothing.

The ancients possessed under his name seventy-seven orations, of which only fifty-two were generally considered authentic. They include public and private orations and a declamation, the *Funeral Oration* for the Athenians slain before Lamia in 323. Of all these works, there remained half a century ago only some very short fragments. Since then, a series of discoveries among the papyri in

<sup>1</sup> The third edition of Blass, Teubner, 1895, alone has all the recently discovered remains of the work of Hyperides.

[Some mention is due also to Kenyon's excellent edition of the orations *Against Athenogenes* and *Against Philippides* (London, 1893), which has notes and a translation. — Tr.]

Egypt has given us six orations, more or less mutilated, which enable us to get an idea of his oratory. The portions discovered belong to the oration *Against Demosthenes*, the *Funeral Oration*, and various public and private cases. The last of the discoveries (1892) has disclosed notably the larger part of the plea *Against Athenogenes*, one of his most celebrated judicial speeches.

What chiefly characterizes him is a combination of various and almost contrary qualities: force with grace, vehemence with wit, subtlety with simplicity,—and all this natural, easy, abundant, and yet restrained. He recalls now Lysias, now Isocrates, now Demosthenes, yet is truly himself. The author of the treatise *On the Sublime* compares him acutely with the victors of the *pentathlon*, who, though inferior in each exercise to the specialists, win, owing to their high average. The ingenious comparison does not do Hyperides full justice, because, though not possessing the simplicity of Lysias, nor the abundance of Isocrates, he is still, on the whole, superior to either, inasmuch as he adds to most of their qualities the prime quality of a great orator, namely, force. He has less of it than Demosthenes, yet it is abundant. Besides, he had great wit; his puns were celebrated, and his written orations show something of his piquant force. By his lively, free style, his rare talent as a narrator, his adroit, incisive argumentation, his easy aptitude in general truths, his clever, flexible, vivid invention, he is one of the purest representatives of Atticism.

The plea *Against Athenogenes* is an exquisite example of the art of the logographers. The case was tried after 330, which, we may say in passing, proves that he returned to his former profession, at least at intervals, till the end of his life. The oration presents an amusing picture of manners. The client is a young man, who, yielding to an amorous caprice, found himself induced by clever intrigue to buy at a high price a perfumer's shop, that really had little value. He petitioned the judges to annul the sale. In his story there figure an intriguing old lady, Antigona, once a courtesan, and a worthy companion of hers, the metic Athenogenes, with some supernumeraries. All this curious group is sketched with a light, skilful hand, and the pleader's simplicity renders him almost pathetic amidst these sharpers.

The discourse *Against Demosthenes*, which interests us still more, is unfortunately much mutilated. But what we have is full of interest. It includes a certain number of the elements in the setting of the case; and the language is lofty, pungent, and vivacious. Sometimes it has a touching sadness, which well befits such a debate.

The *Funeral Oration*, pronounced in 323, was probably the last



that he found time to write. It also is very interesting, on account of the new proof it gives of the extraordinary scope of his talent. The logographer and political orator was no bungler in a type of composition so different; he adapted himself to the laws of this composition with perfect ease, and even showed himself original. His eulogy of Leosthenes, the Athenian general, departs from the ordinary impersonality of funeral orations, in which one sees only the image of the city. His consolations addressed to the relatives of the dead are of delicately sympathetic feeling. The manner in which he speaks of the future life astonishes us in a funeral oration at Athens. Finally, the politician is revealed in one passage, in which there is clear view of what the civilized world was going to be under the rule of a single master, and of the horror which that condition would inspire in an Athenian.

Besides these orations, certain fragments, preserved through the citation of ancient authors, very neatly fill out the picture of the man. Take, for example, that in which he ironically resumes the exploits of Demades, who had achieved the commissioning of a *proxenia*:—

“The motives he alleges in his decree are not his real motives, Athenians. If you wish him to be *proxenus*, I will reëdit the decree as follows: ‘The people has awarded him this *proxenia* for having, in all his acts and words, done the works of Philip; for having, as *hipparch*, delivered the cavaliers of Olynthus to Philip; for having, by that act, brought on the ruin of the Chalcidians; for having become, after the capture of Olynthus, purchaser of the prisoners sold at auction; for having opposed the city’s interests in the affair of the temple at Delos; for having carefully abstained, after the battle of Chæronea, from burying a fallen soldier, or ransoming a single prisoner.’”<sup>1</sup>

Here is another, on the children of the orator Lyeurgus, who had been maltreated after their father’s death:—

“What will passers-by say when they see this tomb? They will say: ‘This man was a sage when he was alive. We commissioned him to administer the finances, and he found revenues, built the theatre, the Odeon, and the arsenals, and constructed a fleet of triremes and some harbors. In return, the city has heaped infamy upon him and thrown his children into a dungeon.’”

16. **Lyeurgus.**<sup>2</sup>—This Lyeurgus, of whom Hyperides spoke so nobly, was one of the most highly respected men at Athens, and certainly one of the purest political orators of this heterogeneous group. Yet neither his life nor his oratory calls for long study.

<sup>1</sup> [Fr. 79 (76 in the third edition).—Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> Editions by Scheibe (Teubner); and by Rehdantz (Teubner, 1876, with notes).

Born about 390, of the illustrious family of the Eteobutadæ,<sup>1</sup> he was the pupil, it is said, of Isocrates and Plato. His birth and riches freed him from the necessity of being a logographer. He entered heart and soul into politics, as the ally of Demosthenes. But it is only after the coming of his party to power that he attained his full stature. In 338 he was elected commissary of the military appropriations, perhaps; or more probably, president of the college of commissaries of the Theoric fund; and displayed, as an administrator, the qualities that enabled him to find, for twelve years, as Hyperides said, the revenues for magnificent public works. He died of disease in 324, on the eve of the affair of Harpalus. After his death, Mene-sechmes, his successor and his enemy, had his children condemned to pay a heavy fine, under pretext of a deficit left by him in the treasury.

This hatred is explained in part by the character of Lycurgus. He wished above all to be a champion of justice, an inflexible defender of law. The thankless rôle of public prosecutor, too often abandoned to sycophants, was decried. He took it up courageously and ennobled it, though he used rather excessive severity. The ancients attributed to him about fifteen orations, which were nearly all accusations. The only one still extant is that against a certain Leocrates, who, after the battle of Chæronea, had stealthily left Athens, and at the end of seven or eight years had returned, thinking himself forgotten. But Lycurgus was watching; a criminal accusation was brought against the fugitive, who escaped death by a majority of only one vote.

The oration *Against Leocrates* shows in Lycurgus a pitiless reasoner, animated with a very noble, patriotic passion, which is, however, savage, and at times sophistic in its deductions. Thus, scarcely being able to find a suitable legal charge against the conduct of Leocrates, he had recourse to the plea that, if no particular law seemed applicable, it was because his conduct was more criminal than the acts comprised in the laws. Such a theory would lead one far afield. But what cannot be gainsaid is, on the one hand, the lofty, impersonal character of the orator's passion, and, on the other, the logic, now subtle, now rigorous, often very effective, with which he steels himself to make odious the deeds he decries. The language is in harmony with the thought — rigid, firm, and somewhat copious, yet strong. The pupil of Isocrates is revealed in the harmony of

<sup>1</sup> [The etymology of the word indicates that the members of this family were the real descendants of Butes (ἔτεος. βούτης); and the last part in turn is connected with βούς as στρατιώτης with στρατιά. Butes was, accordingly, a cowherd. See further Dem. p. 573, l. 10 (Baïter and Sauppe); and Æsch. p. 47, l. 39, same edition. — Tr.]

the sentences; but the redundant slackness of the master gives place in the pupil to a pompous clearness, to maxims pronounced with authority, to antitheses recalling Antiphon, to the dilemmas of a skilled logician. The character of Lyeurgus, howsoever lofty, certainly lacked charm; and his style accurately reflected his character in these respects.

**17. Dinarchus.**<sup>1</sup> — With Dinarchus, the last of the "Ten Orators" of the Alexandrian canon, we reach the close of oratory proper, and descend one more degree; for if Lyeurgus is not the equal of Hyperides, Dinarchus is not the equal of Lyeurgus. He may not have lacked talent, but he was not highly original.

Though a Corinthian by birth, he lived at Athens as a metic; this excluded him from the public rostrum. Therefore he became a logographer. He seems to have been born about 360. He was already known as a logographer in 324, at the time of the affair of Harpalus, for several of the accusers employed him to compose their orations. After the death of Alexander, his celebrity only increased. To him were attributed more than one hundred and sixty orations. It is not known when he died.

Of his very numerous works we have but three orations. They all pertain to the affair of Harpalus. The first, directed against Demosthenes, is full of interest, owing to that orator's fame. The other two seem frigid. Dinarchus was a clever orator, who used correctly and judiciously the examples set by his predecessors; but it is impossible to discover, in his faultlessly correct language, a really personal accent, anything that adds in the least to the oratorical patrimony of Athens.

**18. Demetrius of Phaleron. Conclusion.** — After Dinarchus, is there need of mentioning Demetrius? He was not included in the list of the classics; and he was not merely an orator and statesman, but also a philosopher and scholar.<sup>2</sup> He was born in the deme of Phaleron about the middle of the fourth century. His father had been a slave, but had become a wealthy citizen. He received a most careful education as the pupil and friend of Theophrastus. A partisan of Macedon, he became all-powerful under Cassander, and governed Athens for ten years (317–307). Deposed by Poliorcetes, he retired to the court of Ptolemy Soter in Egypt and gave him, it is said, the idea of founding the Alexandrian library. He fell into disgrace under Philadelphus, and died about 280. He left various writings, historical, political, and literary (*History of Ten Years, On Demagogy, Rhetoric*, etc.), and some orations which were still read in the time

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Blass, Teubner, 2d ed., 1888.

<sup>2</sup> Fragments in *Fragm. Hist. Græc.* by Müller, *sup. cit.* vol. II.

of Cicero and Quintilian. Nothing remains; but we know that his oratory was pleasing and florid, with philosophical tendencies. Though an Athenian, he was almost an Alexandrian in his energy, erudition, and wit. He may at least have habitually harangued the people. After him, Attic oratory ended. It was hushed with the loss of liberty. The art of the logographers became a trade whose every recipe was known. The oratory of declamation, taking refuge in the schools, was practised only by the teachers of rhetoric. In brief, there was no longer any real oratory, and above all none that was Attic. In every type of composition, true Atticism is characterized by predominance of nature and reason over artifice and bad taste. The great beauty of Attic oratory was due to the fund of logic and good sense to which each orator, according to his own tendencies, added his original qualities of wit, grace, and pathos. Hence it is an unequalled oratorical literature — not always truthful, assuredly, nor impartial; nor yet always of a high moral tone, or fully exempt from sophistry; but splendid, nevertheless, because its manner never suffered decline, and sometimes attained sublimity. Henceforth there was no real oratory. Rhetoric was to be cultivated still, and that with ardor; but more and more, owing to the lack of a serious purpose, it began to spend its strength in empty flourishes of wit or in the seductions of fine writing.



## CHAPTER XXI

### COMEDY IN THE FOURTH CENTURY

1. **General View.** Traditional Division into Middle and New Comedy. 2. Transitional Period. Attempts to write Non-political Comedy. Its Characteristics. 3. Poets of the Transitional Period. Antiphanes and Alexis. 4. Final Form of the New Comedy : its Characteristics. 5. The Masters of the New Comedy. Philemon and Menander.

**1. General View. Traditional Division into Middle and New Comedy.**<sup>1</sup>—In a preceding chapter we left comedy at the beginning of the fourth century in a period of transformation; and we indicated briefly the principal causes of that transformation. Now that we have examined the general movement of thought in the century, it is time to return to comedy and finish the account.

In the last third of the century, in the time of Alexander, and particularly after his death, comedy, transformed, shone forth in its greatest brilliance with Menander and Philemon. This really new form of the antique type is called in literature the New Comedy, in opposition to the so-called Old Comedy of the preceding century. Between the two, the usage has become established of distinguishing, under the name of Middle Comedy, an intermediate form, commencing with the fourth century and continuing till 330. This division of the history of comedy appears to go back to the critics of the time of the Empire; or, to be more precise, to the second century of our era. Perhaps it is even older. When once established it was perpetuated; it was classical among the Byzantines, and has come down to us. Yet it was unknown among contemporaries; Aristotle opposes the New Comedy to the Old, but does not speak of a Middle Comedy. It must be admitted that the definitions of this intermediate form attempted by ancient and modern critics are, on the whole, vague and unsatisfactory. The truth is that the New Comedy appeared as early as the beginning of the fourth century; but, like the Old Comedy, it passed through a period of more or less unsuccessful efforts preceding and preparing for the period of the master-

<sup>1</sup> Consult: the works mentioned in connection with comedy, p. 229, and also G. Grizot, *Méandre*, a historic and literary study treating Greek comedy and Greek society, Paris, 1855; Fielitz, *De Atticorum Comœdia Tripartita*, Bonn, 1866. For ancient testimony, see the prolegomena of the Didot *Antiphanes*, and Kaibel, *Poetarum Comicorum Fragmenta*, I, part 1.

pieces. If one chooses, one may speak of this period as that of Middle Comedy; but the distinction, although authorized by usage, has more disadvantages than advantages. It seems to give to a simple series of transitional forms the same importance as to the two groups of distinctly characterized works between which they occur. It tends to make us believe that the comedies of the first part of the fourth century are equally different from those of Aristophanes and those of Menander; whereas, in reality, they differ much more from the former than from the latter.

**2. The Transitional Period. Attempts to write Non-political Comedy. Its Characteristics.** — Discarding, then, a term that has no value, we must recognize that the New Comedy reaches its perfection only in the last third of the fourth century. We must, accordingly, give some attention to the long period of transition in which it is being elaborated, with a view to defining roughly the tendencies of that period.

What best characterizes this comedy while in process of transformation is the abandonment of political satire and of extravagant fancy. On the one hand, statesmen and public affairs are no longer introduced; and on the other, fairyland and the inventions of buffoonery are given up, and there is closer approach, as time goes by, to the realities of life. We need not repeat the causes of these changes; but we must insist somewhat on the effects produced.

Competitions in comedy were held in the fourth century almost as in the fifth. Their perpetuation is attested by numerous documents, epigraphic and literary. But we see that, toward the middle of the century, five poets, instead of three, took part in the competition. This leads to the belief that each play took less time for its representation than formerly. Is the fact to be explained by the complete disappearance of the chorus? The testimony of the critics and grammarians of the time of the Empire affirm such a disappearance; but it is contradicted by various epigraphic documents and even by passages from contemporary writers. In reality, the comic chorus was not suppressed, though it came to be separated almost entirely from the action. Its importance was diminished till it merely occupied the interludes with dances. After that, there were no more parabases, no more satiric chants, no more of those ample lyric developments which once formed an indispensable part of the play. The length of time necessary was naturally lessened. What is more important, as the earlier chorus represented the fantastic element, this element disappeared with the functions of the chorus. There were no more wasps, clouds, birds; only men appeared on the scene, and in the orchestra, only a group of ballet-dancers.

The productions of the poets at this time were parodies and plays resembling both the comedy of manners and that of intrigue.

The droll characters of mythology had already become favorites with certain comic poets of the fifth century. Myths illustrated by tragedy were turned into farce; gods and heroes were travestied into buffoons. Cratinus, even Aristophanes, and most of all, the comic poet Plato, had furnished examples of this comedy. Throughout the first half of the fourth century, one might have believed that parodies would be henceforth one of the great sources of comedy. In fact, nearly all the legends about the gods had apparently been laid under contribution. The comic process consisted chiefly, it seems, in representing gods and heroes as ordinary burghers. Without need of coarseness or extravagance, the very contrast between the conventional grandeur of the characters and the commonplace features of their rôle provoked laughter. Hence the poets sought especially legends permitting them to show their characters in the most trivial aspects: births, marriages, banquets, and gallant adventures. Sometimes allusions to things of the day were concealed by such allegorical inventions; but this was not essential, and perhaps unusual. Parody in general had to be content with being parody. In turning myths to ridicule, there was no intention of impious conduct; public opinion would not have permitted it. Yet, whether the intention were there or no, mythology could only lose respect by being thus treated. The success of such artificial comedy appears to have been transient; and when the New Comedy was really perfected, the practice was discontinued.

The novel feature of the comedy of the fourth century consisted in the representation of character; and this feature appears even in the first half of the century. At first superficial, it progressed steadily till the time of Menander, when it attained its perfection.

A large number of the plays assigned to Middle Comedy have titles designating a trade, a social condition, or a country: *The Peasant*, *The Seamstress*, *The Flute-player*, *The Bæotian Woman*, *The Byzantine*, *The Painter*, *The Coachman*, *The Soldier*, etc. An equally large number get their title from some particular adventure, the mental state of one of the personages, or a characteristic detail of the action; as, *The Enemy of Vice*, *Brothers of Kin*, *The Twins*, *The Treasure*, *The Outrage*, etc. Without pretending to draw too precise conclusions, we can at least affirm two things. First, all the plays had a fundamental setting taken from ordinary life. The representation was of things that happened or could happen every day: a peasant, slightly foolish, comes to the city and there is duped or made sport of; or two men have the same name, whence result ridiculous confusions.

Second, character-painting was one of the necessary elements; for the adventures represented could not be given an air of verisimilitude and made interesting unless the people to whom they happened were real persons.

But this representation of character was still elementary and superficial. It was impossible to pass at once from the extreme of fantasy to delicate and profound observation. The poets of the time created a number of conventional types, and the generation following did not disdain to profit thereby. Such types were the Parasite, the Boastful Soldier, the Slave-merchant, and the Cook. It is probable that many others were sketched also, old men and young men, slaves and courtesans. In all this, the poets probably amused their audience by a semblance of jesting truthfulness, instead of captivating it by true moral interest. Except in a few passages, perhaps, the characters did not display all the elements of their nature; they had more of the externally ridiculous than of true sentiment. What they all lacked was the fundamental element which constitutes the man himself.

Consequently we may conjecture the nature of the intrigue. Greeks who had read Euripides and seen his tragedies represented again and again would not be embarrassed in making ingenious combinations of events. Many of the titles cited above suggest the idea of complicated situations. But as the value of a delicate painting of sentiment was not yet sufficiently well appreciated, the intrigues were not combined in such a way as to make them plausible. The poets, when inventing the action of their comedies, aimed rather at situations purely comical than at such as would show the fundamental character of the personages. It was not the science of intrigue that was wanting so much as a clear idea of its proper functions.

**3. Poets of the Transitional Period. Antiphanes and Alexis.<sup>1</sup>**—A considerable number of representatives of this transitional comedy are known to us by name; we have also a few fragments of their works; but this does not suffice to give a precise idea of each one. We shall distinguish here, as being more celebrated than the others, only two, Antiphanes and Alexis.

Born toward the close of the fifth century, Antiphanes was probably an Asiatic Greek. He lived till about 330, and was consequently a contemporary of Plato, Isocrates, and even Demosthenes. Some attributed to him two hundred and eighty comedies; others, three hundred and sixty-five. Such abundance is scarcely compatible with the scruples of exact art. Antiphanes worked with speed.

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in the collections mentioned on p. 229.



Tameness and negligence were the necessary consequences of his haste. He won, it is said, only thirteen victories. Part of his plays, as the existing titles show, were parodies of mythology; his collection, then, marked the culmination of this somewhat vulgar type. Another part must have represented types from among the people. The impression we obtain to-day from his fragments is but moderately favorable. The talent they show is scarcely more than an aptitude for appropriating certain forms of trite pleasantry. He is prolix and monotonous; his principal merit seems to be his elegant facility. He can turn well a reflection, sometimes give a very piquant form to ideas otherwise commonplace, and amuse his public for the moment by effects of style or invention. He is, in brief, a poet of the second order, without marked originality.

Alexis is younger by perhaps twenty years, and seems to have been the superior. Born at Thurii in Magna Græcia, and later naturalized at Athens, he was, as we learn from Suidas, the uncle of Menander and his master in dramatic art. His long life of more than a hundred years extended over the whole fourth century. The same biographer attributes to him two hundred and forty-five comedies. The small number of mythological subjects he treated is worthy of remark. It is probable that he was among those who freed comedy from its vagueness of character and assigned it definitely to its new domain. A large number of his fragments show clever sprightliness, amusing variety, or vivacity of invention. His fantasy, taking a discreet form, is fine and really agreeable. *The Education of Heracles by Linus* (fr. 135, Kock) is a pretty scene throughout. There is more joyous good humor than force or penetration. None of his fragments attest any particular power of observation or intense study of reality. He must rather have sketched certain pleasing types vividly and roughly than given details of character and sentiment. Another ancient writer, whose testimony is denied, however, by Athenæus,<sup>1</sup> says that he created the character of the parasite. Evidently in him the type took on a deeper relief, as did probably that of the boastful cook, and several others.

4. **Final Form of the New Comedy: its Characteristics.** — From about 330, the time when the poets we have mentioned were disappearing or growing old, the New Comedy reached its perfection. Before speaking of the men who made it brilliant, it will be well to characterize summarily the type.

The essential tendency of the period we have just studied was reaching its climax. We have, then, substantially a comedy of

<sup>1</sup> Athenæus, VI, 235 E.

intrigue, yet one that aims to imitate contemporary life. Systematically neglecting public affairs, which more and more lost their importance, it takes its subjects from everyday experience. ~~What~~ it seeks to find here is the truth about human nature. This is its really distinctive quality. For sixty years comedy had shown a tendency to come closer to real life; but too often the journey was broken off in the middle, with a comedy of convention. Menander and Philemon definitely brought comedy to represent the real world. The never ending descriptions of feasts, the parodies, the sham philosophical discussions, the conventional jests, the high-sounding babble of cooks or swaggering soldiers, the long tales of parasites — all that had amused two generations of Athenians from the end of the Peloponnesian War till the advent of Alexander — appeared artificial when the truth was discovered. If aught of the artificial was retained, it was in the way of brief episodes, wholly secondary; the interest henceforth was in something else. As soon as the Athenians had seen the true image of the life of Athens, and behind it the image of human life in those features that are universally attractive, it no longer cared for anything else.

Within these limits, the subject surpassing all others came of itself or forced its way; it was love. A passion belonging to every day of every generation; which reveals, in every person whom it touches, his true nature; which enhances the charm and the ardor of youth; which makes old age sometimes attractive, though more often ridiculous; which brings into play a thousand domestic interests; which gives rise to project after project; which has constant need of expedients and of intrigue; which is more powerful than any other passion; and which, withal, often borders on the pathetic without departing from the limits of the comical, — this was precisely the element needed by the new poets. Love became the essential element of all their plays. Unfortunately, Athenian public opinion scarcely allowed the representation of legitimate love; it would not have sanctioned the frank unveiling of domestic life. Hence recourse to irregular amours was inevitable. Comedy lost thereby, not in moral quality alone, but also in variety.

The intrigue was ingenious, adroitly developed, and varied, and henceforth in no danger of being lost in an excessive multiplicity of events tending to relegate to the background the depiction of sentiments. The imitations by the Roman poets, Plautus and Terence, give us a fairly clear idea of what in general this intrigue must have been. But let us not overlook the differences. The Latin plays abound more in episodes, and are more complicated. Their authors follow closely the Greek play that they choose as their basis; but

they add here and there scenes obtained from elsewhere. On the whole, Greek comedy must have been more simple. A single dramatic idea was developed, and all the action arose out of it. The audience always enjoyed recognitions. There were few plays in which some secret was not finally disclosed which would help on an interesting amour. One of the ordinary types was as follows: A young man takes a fancy for a young woman who is a stranger. Various obstacles hinder the realization of his wishes — her social condition, the want of money, the opposition of a father or guardian. A cunning slave aids the young man; success and failure, hope and despair, come to him in turn; finally it is discovered that the young woman is free-born; and the whole affair ends in a marriage. This could be varied in a thousand ways; and herein the Athenian poets excelled. They can be thought of as curious searchers, always on the watch for diversity. A lawsuit, a windfall, an abduction, an unforeseen circumstance, an inheritance, a stroke of fortune, a love adventure, a false setting revealed by some chance indiscretion, — these were vividly conceived and offered many a suggestion, which the poets could appropriate to their needs, modifying and perfecting what reality had sketched.

The tendency to imitate life was but moderately favorable to the creation of characters with a decided turn. An Alceste, a Tartuffe, a Harpagon,<sup>1</sup> is scarcely to be found in real life as pictured in literature; nature outlines and rarefies the traits which genius and idealism alone can well portray. The poets of that time had no idea of such a thing. What they represented was chiefly those ways of thinking and feeling in which all men are alike; and in the general resemblance, the differences which they portrayed most vividly were those due to age, sex, social condition, circumstances of relationship, or imaginary situations, rather than to character itself. In their *repertoire* were found three or four types of fathers, two or three of young men, as many of slaves and courtesans, two or three of married women, etc. In each category, the usual traits were given precedence over the unusual. The analogies, which strike us even in the imitations of Latin comedy, were made more striking still by the masks of the actors. One should read Pollux (*Onomasticon*, Bk. IV, 113) for an interesting enumeration of the masks of the New Comedy. They denoted by their very appearance what was typical of the rôle; this met one's gaze at the beginning. The individual was revealed but gradually by his words or actions, and remained always subordinate.

Here there was danger of monotony, but the cleverness of the

<sup>1</sup> [These are all characters in the plays of Molière. — Tr.]

Attic mind avoided it. The poets gave their personages, instead of thoroughly full characterization, a philosophy of life which varied with their instincts and situations. It is a pleasure to see in the existing fragments, diversity, boldness, grace, sometimes even profundity, and especially delicate fitness of the reflections spoken by the personages. With great tact and cleverness, the poets modify infinitely the view-point from which things are seen and the resulting opinions, keeping account not only of permanent differences in age, sex, and situation, but also in moods, humor, and the play of personal sentiments. Hence a really dramatic variety is seen everywhere in the representation of characters apparently identical. Fathers indulgent and fathers severe, those that are deceived and those that expose themselves to deception, are substantially the same everywhere; but in the motives for their indulgence or their severity, and in the degrees and phases, how many delicate differences, amusing and skilfully imitated from the truth!

Thus constituted, was comedy really comic? To be sure, it no longer excited the noisy, tumultuous laughter of the Old Comedy; but this is not saying that it ceased to amuse. It was amusing, just as life itself is at times, because it showed the deception of overconfiding persons, the ridiculous catastrophes into which fools run, or the embarrassment of baffled deceivers. It had also, as if by inheritance, stock characters whose ordinary function was to raise a laugh: the parasite, the blustering soldier, and above all, the intriguing slave, who duped the old father for the benefit of the son, and was really unsurpassed in boldness, presence of mind, clever feints, and resourceful inventions. He gave rise to the long lineage of Scapins, to whom he remained superior; these have become liberated convicts and real bandits; he was only an unscrupulous ragamuffin, with the vices of his station, and the excuses which that station allows. Moreover, good sentiments were not always absent from his character.

Throughout the New Comedy there is perceptible the spirit of Epicureanism. In the characters, in the ideas, and perhaps in the development of the plays, one finds it in the part conventionally attributed to chance (τύχη). It is not, however, theoretic, systematic Epicureanism, but rather the practical phase, often unconscious and inconsistent, as it really existed in a society in which the discipline of life was singularly lax, beliefs were plastic and indefinite, and habits had more force than principles. Instead, therefore, of making cold or heavy the dramas it inspired, it gave them an air of naturalness; and so it furnishes us interesting testimony concerning a state of mind then very common.



From the point of view of morality, it is a delicate question to decide whether the New Comedy is inferior or superior to the old. The latter, coarse and offensive as it was, had a purpose clearly distinguished from its buffoonery. It extolled political honesty, simplicity of character, and the stanch virtue of the old poets. On the whole, it was a sane and vigorous satire. There is nothing to match this in the New Comedy. The latter represented what is ridiculous or feeble, such as passion that is not sufficiently controlled. The spectacle, with its vivid reality, is both amusing and monitory. (An intelligent man would strengthen himself in good sense, prudence, and moderation by contemplating it—and still more so, if the situations were chosen and composed with the design of making them instructive. But the instruction, it must be acknowledged, was of no very high order.) The ingenious poets show well how villanous is the miser, how ridiculous is superstition, how disagreeable to others and to himself the boor becomes; they show us how easily fathers are duped; they put before us the advantages and disadvantages of severity and indulgence, and depict the giddiness and excessiveness of youth. It is a lesson of experience, and nothing more; yet a delicate lesson, amusing and profitable to the right-minded. It increases their store of practical ideas, exercises their judgment, and enlarges their knowledge of the world; but it provokes no lofty reflections and no sentiments of generosity.

**5. The Masters of the New Comedy. Philemon and Menander.**<sup>1</sup>—This comedy had numerous representatives whose names have been transmitted to us. The most illustrious are Diphilus of Sinope, who was imitated several times by Plautus; Apollodorus of Carystus in Eubœa, who furnished Terence the original of the *Phormio* and the *Hecyra*; Philemon and Menander; and lastly Posidippus of Cassandrea<sup>2</sup> in Macedon, who belonged to the following century. We shall consider here only Philemon and Menander.

**Philemon**, born probably in Cilicia in 361, made his appearance at Athens, we are told, about 330. He lived there afterward at the Piræus, attaining a very advanced age; according to Ælian he died in 262. A fertile poet, he composed at least ninety comedies. Sixty are still known by title and by some fragments. Most of them were received with favor. Philemon even won victories over Menander.

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in the collections mentioned above. In the Didot Collection, those of Menander are added to the volume containing the fragments of Aristophanes.

Consult: G. Guizot, cited p. 392; Benoît, *Essai historique et littéraire sur la comédie de Ménandre*, Paris, 1854; Weil, *Études sur l'antiquité grecque*, Paris, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> [This is the later name of Potidæa in Chalcidice. — Tr.]

Plautus closely imitated him in several of his works: the *Mercator* is a more or less exact copy of his Ἑμπορος, the *Trinummus* of his Θησαυρός, and perhaps the *Mostellaria* of his Φάσμα. He had an inventive, clever genius; but he was occupied as much, if not more, with intrigue as with the drawing of character. If he created amusing and varied situations, his characters were vaguely outlined and lacked relief. He concealed the defect by the wit and grace of his dialogue, by the brilliant vivacity of his reflections, by an imagination naturally elegant and amusing, and by skill in the employment of that philosophy of life of which we have already spoken.

Menander ranks high above Philemon. He is the real master of the New Comedy, the successor of Aristophanes in the series of great comic poets. The misfortune which has deprived us of his works does not hinder us completely from appreciating aright his merit.

He was born at Athens a little before 340, and so was about twenty years younger than Philemon. His father, Diopithes of Cephisia, seems to have left him a considerable fortune. Being the nephew of the poet Alexis already mentioned, he received from him, it is said, the first lessons in his art. In philosophy he came under the influence of Theophrastus and Epicurus. His first play was presented in 322, about a year after the death of Alexander the Great. The sad events of which Greece was then the theatre do not seem to have occupied the young poet much. Elegant, leisurely, and fond of pleasure, he devoted himself to the celebrated Glycera, and lived near her in her villa at the Piræus. Ptolemy Soter tried in vain to induce him to come to Egypt; Athens alone delighted and detained him. He was handsome except for being cross-eyed. As a delicate Epicurean, he gave his attention to his dress and his gait. His only serious occupation appears to have been the writing of comedies. Within a period of about thirty years, till his death in 292, he composed more than a hundred, an average of more than three a year. We learn from Apollodorus that he obtained the first prize in only eight competitions. Philemon pleased the people more; but Menander had on his side the favor of the educated, and he seems to have had a high idea of his superiority. "One day," says Aulus Gellius, "he met Philemon, who had just obtained the first prize. 'Tell me frankly, Philemon,' he asked, 'when you win away from me, are you satisfied with yourself?'"

No play of Menander's has come down to us. At most, we can judge of him to some extent from Plautus and Terence. The former borrowed from him the *Bacchides* (Δὺς ἑξαπατῶν) and the *Stichus* (Φιλάδελφος), perhaps also the *Penulus* (Καρχηδόνιος); the latter the *Andria*, the *Adelphæ*, and the *Heautontimoroumenos*. Besides,

we have a large number of fragments of lost plays. We may cite particularly those of the *Laborer*, published in 1898 from the débris of an Egyptian papyrus. Among those current in antiquity must be distinguished the *Γνώμαι μονόστιχοι*, a collection of various maxims formed in the Roman period, when the authentic verses were mingled with others of uncertain origin.

There is no need to insist on the merits of Menander's plays in point of structure. We can judge only from the imitations of Terence, which are closer than those of Plautus; but Terence combined with the plays which he reproduced certain scenes of different origin. Menander seems to have possessed a high degree of dramatic instinct. Perhaps, however, his invention of comic situations was inferior to Philemon's.

His great superiority, beyond doubt, was in the painting of character. All the ancient critics are unanimous on the point. All who could read him praise his exquisite truthfulness and the perfect naturalness of the sentiments which he gave to his creations. With remarkable dexterity, he could express, in language always elegant and appropriate to each particular rôle, differences of judgment, of tone, and of humor. All his characters had a certain grace, which was the poet's original gift. They all spoke the same graceful, easy language, ingenious, familiar, and in good taste. Now it was tender and passionate: now grave, strong, bitter; now ironical and satiric; and now gay, playful, brilliant, full of fancy and sprightliness. The power of exciting emotion was his as truly as the sense of the comical. Cæsar, speaking of the Roman poet Terence in a celebrated epigram, declares him inferior to Menander, because of a lack of force. This was recognizing completely the merit of the Greek original.

The striking truth of the sentiments, the dramatic vivacity, the appreciation of real life, are still evident in the large number of fragments that we possess. Unhappily, most of them have been preserved only because of expressing some general truth. Therefore, in a way, it is only the most impersonal element of his works that we know. But for this very reason, the fragments cause us to admire his manner of giving a new turn to traditional and current phrases. He makes us feel, even beneath what is commonplace, the extraordinary humor of the personage he describes. His type of crabbed man cries out:—

“If some one of the gods should come and say to me: ‘Crato, when you are dead, you are going to be born again. Then, whatever you wish to be, that you shall be, dog, sheep, goat, man, or horse. You have another life in store. This is your destiny: choose what

you wish.' 'Then make me,' I should cry out at once, 'anything but a man. Among living beings, man is the only one whose weal and woe have nothing in common with justice. If a horse is excellent, it is better cared for than the others. If you are a good dog, you will be prized much more than a bad one. A good fighting-cock is fed differently from the cowardly one that trembles before his superior. But a man, in this life, though honest, well-born, and noble, is not profited thereby. He who succeeds best is the flatterer; next best, the sycophant; and then the wicked man. Better be an ass than to see your inferiors outshining you in splendor.'"

In short, it amounts to saying that success does not by any means come to reward merit. The thought was not in itself original, even in the time of Menander. But how true to life seems the exasperated fellow, who takes pleasure in his prejudices, develops his idea to excess, with all his heart, all his imagination, all his feelings of resentment! Dramatic truth is what gives value to such thoughts much more than their real worth; and it is here most happily emphasized, even to plenitude of comical effect.

Though admirable in the comedy of manners, Menander does not seem to have risen above his contemporaries in the direction of the comedy of character. Most of his personages are from the common ranks of humanity. Personal traits, though delicately indicated, were not strong nor deep enough to create those great dramatic individuals who stand contrasted so clearly with the common type. To this very fact is due, perhaps, part of the great influence he exercised after his death. In him more than in any other, Greek comedy, though manifesting its own particular qualities, became largely human. It represented man in general, under the aspects that are everywhere the same or nearly so; and it studied man with a sympathy which even its mockery does not overshadow. The celebrated verse of Terence, *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*,<sup>1</sup> indicates very well one of the qualities that do him greatest honor.

<sup>1</sup> [Human myself, I interest myself in all that is human. — Tr.]



## CHAPTER XXII

### NON-DRAMATIC POETRY IN THE FIFTH AND FOURTH CENTURIES

1. Persistence of the Ancient Poetic Types in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries.
2. Transformation of Lyric Poetry in the Fifth Century. The Dithyramb and the Nome. Lyric Representations.
3. The Chief Dithyrambic and Nomic Poets of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries.
4. Other Lyric Types. The Elegy and the Iamb.
5. Epic in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries. Panyasis; Antimachus; Chœrilus.

**1. Persistence of the Ancient Poetic Types in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries.**—We have been obliged to lay aside, in the preceding chapters, from the beginning of the fifth century, the history of the various poetic types that were foreign to the theatre, such as lyric and epic poetry. It was necessary to call attention first to what was more important, tragedy and comedy on the one hand, and oratory, history, and philosophy on the other. We may go back now for a rapid review of other forms of literary production. For though they are of less importance, they cannot be quite neglected.

Lyric poetry, be it remembered, had been particularly brilliant in the beginning of the fifth century, the time of Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides. Tragedy, in its development, eclipsed lyric poetry, but could not render it useless. There were lyric forms assigned by tradition to ancient religious or civil uses; and here the drama could not take the place of the lyric type. The latter was necessary also for festivals, for the celebration of great events, for banquets, and for various other functions of social life. The usages of bygone times, still continuing, gave rise to sincere sentiments that craved expression in poetic works.

Epic had almost disappeared when dramatic poetry arose; it no longer satisfied the general needs. Yet it had not ceased to be read and to interest the educated. It was natural that, in a time when literary art was more cultivated than ever, a few men of poetic culture should wish to restore it to favor. Thus can be explained the renewal of this extinct type and the degree of success it attained in the fifth and fourth centuries.

To be sure, we can devote but little space to all this secondary poetry, as, in any case, it is represented only by fragments. We

shall not attempt much more than to give its general characteristics, and shall pass afterward to a rapid enumeration of the poets and their works.

**2. Transformation of Lyric Poetry in the Fifth Century. The Dithyramb and the Nome. Lyric Representations.**—The two most important things in the history of poetry in the fifth century are: the influence of drama on the other types; and the more and more marked predominance of music over poetry.

Music in Greece up to the fifth century was in a very primitive condition, but it then made rapid progress, especially in the latter part of the century. The ancient instruments, the flute and the cithara, were then perfected. These instruments made possible a variety of effects till then unknown. Music was no longer to be subordinate to poetry, as it had been before. It was too rich in resources to be used merely in bringing out the beauties of another art. So, instead of serving poetry, poetry now began to serve music. The inversion of rôles was manifest in several ways. First, among the ancient lyric forms, those were selected that, by nature, were best suited to show the new capabilities of music; and these particular ones were cultivated as much as possible. Thus is explained the favor shown the dithyramb and the nome. By their length and the variety of their structure, these two types showed themselves specially well adapted to display the talent of composers. But though music thus favored them, it took away a great part of their literary importance. Poetic beauty is not only useless, but even undesirable, when music is the principal effect desired. A text too full of thought, written in a vigorous, terse style, allows of only an elementary and designedly weak musical accompaniment. These virtuosos needed a poetry richer in words than in ideas, lavish of pretty tones and images, and able to excite as many emotions and sensations as possible without calling attention to its own importance.

To the influence of music was added that of drama. When the great works of Æschylus had appeared, they roused a sort of rivalry in the lyric poets; the public, charmed and delighted with drama, disdained lyric poetry altogether. It was inevitable that the dithyramb and the nome should become more and more dramatic.

Already the dithyramb of Bacchylides was taking on the form of a dialogue sung to the accompaniment of the flute. That form became predominant in the course of the fifth century. In reality, the dithyramb of the time must be conceived as a species of short tragedy, in which recitation is displaced by song. It must have resembled closely our opera, though not having the same extent of action, nor the same variety of instrumentation. There was in

dithyramb, as in tragedy, a chorus and actors. The actors had the leading parts, which consisted of passionate melodies; the brilliant vivacity of their movements and the expressive flexibility of their voices were displayed in rhythms divested of the structure of antistrophe. "The dithyrambs," says Aristotle (*Problems*, XIX, 15), "once devoted to dramatic imitation (ἐπειδὴ μιμητικοὶ ἐγένοντο), no longer include antistrophes, as they did before." Under such conditions, the play proper was scarcely different from a theme, destined to suggest melodies to the composer.

The nome must have been more conservative. It was traditionally a solo, grave, religious, and narrative, accompanied by the cithara instead of the flute. Gradually, however, under the influence of the same causes, its character was profoundly altered. Besides the soloist of the early nome there was a chorus; then the flute added its notes to those of the cithara, or replaced it; and the simplicity of the old melodies gave way to the brilliant variety of the later art. Thus transformed, the nome also became more like drama; and apparently it was little different, in the end, from the dithyramb. Yet we lack the information necessary for following with precision the development of these types.

The transformed lyric poetry was popular in character, affecting and sonorous, yet meagre in ideas. It was said proverbially at Athens that a man of little wit was "more of a beast than the dithyramb." The poets knew this in composing their dithyrambs, yet were not dissatisfied. They cared little if their poems were empty, their sentences, obscure and tortuous. They wanted chiefly dazzling combinations of words, sonorous syllables, sprightly, light, winged sentences, such as would seem to fly and whirl, though it were in the clouds; or magnificent and ample, such as would give the melody occasion to display itself. Being composers as well as poets, they created music even while they seemed to be creating poetry.

Ancient documents show that lyric representations took place in Athens at the principal festivals, seven or eight times yearly. The importance of the representations induced Pericles to construct a building appropriate to all of them that were not assigned by religious tradition to a definite place. This was the Odeon. Lyric poetry then had its theatre, like drama. It was smaller and roofed over, hence more suitable for carrying the sound of voices and instruments.

From 508, probably, the solemn rendering of great lyric works at the city festivals had taken on at Athens the form of competitions, that continued for centuries. At certain festivals all the demes, or more generally certain ones whose turn had come, were represented

by choruses, which the choregus chosen by them was expected to maintain and have instructed. Prizes were awarded to the victors in the name of the state.

**3. The Chief Dithyrambic and Nomic Poets of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries.**<sup>1</sup>—The transformation of lyric poetry already described was the work of a succession of poets. It is impossible to determine the part of each one with precision.

Contemporaries attributed the initiative in the movement to Melanippides the Younger. All we can say is that, after an elaboration of greater or less length, the new art was cultivated by him about 450. His leading productions, now wholly lost, seem to belong to a period extending from about 450 to 430. Cinesias of Athens, though somewhat younger than Melanippides, was particularly decried by the comic poets, in the name of the old traditions. It is evident from their malicious criticisms that, at the time of the Peloponnesian War, he reproduced a series of dithyramb in which all the fashionable innovations were given free play. But the precise nature of the innovations is unknown, although his talent seems to have been exercised chiefly on the dances and evolutions of the chorus. What Melanippides and Cinesias did for the dithyramb, Phrynys attempted, at the same time, to do for the nome. He seems to have been at the height of his success about 412. According to accounts, he was the first to substitute for the somewhat monotonous calm of the ancient *citharedic* chants a passionate movement. According to Plutarch (*Agis*, c. 10), he used a cithara with nine strings. Aristophanes (*Clouds*, v. 971) reproaches him with having invented soft and effeminate inflections of the voice.

But the great masters of the transformed art, after the period of the innovators was past, were Timotheus of Miletus and Philoxenus of Cythera.

Timotheus lived from 447 to 357. His long life of ninety years was singularly honored. From the beginning of his public career, about 420, he went from one place of contest to another, rendering his musical compositions at Athens, at Sparta, in Macedon, and probably in almost all the great cities of Greece and Asia Minor. He appears to have succeeded almost equally with the nome and the dithyramb; yet his nomes were more celebrated. The characteristic feature of his art was a strong fondness for dramatic imitation. He loved to show the resources of his musical composition by trying to express what seemed not to lend itself well to musical expression. For instance, in a passage of uncertain title he imitated a thunder-storm. His *Artemis*, which he himself sang in the theatre at Athens,

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Bergk, *Poetæ Lyrici Græci*, III, Leipsic, 1882.



began with a curious assemblage of rare epithets, designed to captivate both the mind and the ear. These excesses were atoned for, however, by excellent merits: movement, passion, and enthusiasm associated at times with grandeur. His patriotic nome entitled the *Persians*, which seems to have been written about the time when Agesilaus was fighting in Asia (395-394), was regarded in Greece as one of the most beautiful of lyric poems. It is evident that history was mingled with mythology in his compositions, yet scarcely doubtful that mythology predominated.

His most illustrious rival was Philoxenus of Cythera, who lived from 435 to 380. His life, though somewhat romantic and adventurous, scarcely interests the historian of literature. He is found successively at Sparta, Syracuse, Tarentum, Athens, etc., now well received by Dionysius the Elder, now disgraced by him and thrown into prison. Like Timotheus and all the great literary men of the time, he went in quest of success from city to city. His great reputation was won by his dithyrambs. One of the most celebrated was the *Cyclops*, of which Aristophanes has parodied a passage in the *Plutus*. It was a real drama. The poet took for his subject the love of the Cyclops Polyphemus for the nymph Galatea, and wove in the adventure of Odysseus and his companions from the ninth book of the *Odyssey*, which had already been represented by Euripides. The dithyramb, thus treated, closely resembles both tragedy and satyr-drama.

After Timotheus and Philoxenus, we no longer meet in the history of the dithyramb any really great names. Lyric poetry, subordinated to a complex music, more and more lost the element that had given it its value. Men of original talent no longer cared to cultivate it.

**4. Other Lyric Types. The Elegy and the Iamb.**<sup>1</sup> — The dithyramb and the nome, in their period of success, had been strong rivals of tragedy; they were, like tragedy, public exercises in a way, because they were associated with the city festivals. Besides the great forms of lyric poetry, there were others more humble, which scarcely departed from the circles of private life.

The *scolion*, the table song already described, which had appeared as early as the sixth century, was continued in the fifth and fourth centuries in a multitude of pleasing, ingenious works, sometimes emotional, but, on the whole, quite secondary. They have, moreover, almost wholly disappeared. The only specimen that we need to mention here is Aristotle's *Hymn to Virtue*. Composed about 345, soon after the death of Hermias of Atarneus, who had been

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Bergk, *sup. cit.*, vol. II, p. 360.

one of the philosopher's best friends, it was based upon a touching sentiment and a lofty idea. We may quote at least the beginning:—

“Virtue, object of the efforts of the human race, glorious goal to which life tends, it is for thy beauty, noble maiden, that even death is sought in Hellas, and that men bear the fatigues of illimitable toil. Thy charms create in their souls an undying love; more powerful are they than gold or pleasures, more sweet and pleasing than sleep,” etc.<sup>1</sup>

But the chief form of familiar poetry, then as well as in the preceding period, was the elegy. As in the preceding centuries, it continued to be the almost indispensable accompaniment at reunions of friends and at banquets. Almost all the celebrated men of the fifth and fourth centuries composed elegy. It was particularly the poetry of circumstance, adapted to express every sentiment or caprice, now narrative, now philosophical, passing from eulogy to warning, or even to censure, as an agreeable dissertation on politics, morals, or even topics of the day. It was a form of composition presenting few difficulties, and often becoming insipid; and it could produce but few remarkable works.

In the fifth century its best-known representative was Evenus of Paros. He was born about 460, was both a poet and a sophist, and was in the height of his reputation from 430 to about 400. From the accounts and the few extant fragments we have, Evenus seems to have been a man of the better class, whose poetry had more grace and ingenuity than force or vigor. He loved to moralize, with a chaste elegance that is truly Attic, though he was a countryman of Archilochus. If the collection of his elegies were in existence, it would be interesting to compare it with Xenophon's *Symposium*, as each work represented equally well contemporary good society at Athens.

The tyrant Critias, a wit who had composed tragedies of some merit, was also an elegiac poet. Of his elegies, however, we have only a few fragments, the most interesting of which belonged to a collection entitled the *Republics* or the *Constitutions* (Πολιτεῖαι). The author's spirit of opposition to democracy is certainly manifest; they were aristocratic poems written to suit the taste of the oligarchical fraternities.

Very different is the elegy of Antimachus of Colophon. We shall speak of him a little later, because he was one of the most remarkable epic poets of the fifth century. The elegy as he conceived it was too much like his epic in spirit and subject-matter to

<sup>1</sup> Text in Bergk, vol. II, p. 360.

be separated from it. We shall merely mention it without insisting on the distinction.

The poetry of derision, under the various forms of parody or satire, must have a place in this review beside the elegy, which it resembles in certain ways. But it is not represented either in the fifth century or in the fourth by any work of great merit.

Parody as a type went back at least as far as, if not farther than, the *Batrachomyomachia*. We have seen that it constituted a rather important element of the Old Comedy. We see it developing remarkably at this time outside of the theatre, and used in the service of moral satire.

A poet of the fifth century named Hermippus, in iambic poems entitled *Trimeters and Tetrameters*, parodied the legend of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, not in mockery, but as a setting upon which he could weave jestingly his criticism of contemporaries. Hegemon of Thasos, at the same time, probably had an analogous purpose in composing his *Gigantomachia*, which was, in fact, only a satiric autobiography. On the contrary, in the hands of Eubœus of Parium parody seems to have aimed only at pleasing effects. He assumed the tone of epic to relate the quarrels of street-porters.

In the second half of the fourth century, the period of Menander, this spurious type was cultivated with some success by the celebrated Cynic philosopher, Crates of Thebes, a disciple of Diogenes. He composed *Iambes*, *Elegies*, and *Hexameters*. Whatever the variety of the rhythm, the spirit inspiring it was always the same, and so was the literary process. He imitated, not without grace, the old poets Homer and Solon, turning their verses from the primitive sense to satire. It was still parody, though inspired by a doctrinal asceticism, which mocked at men's being mastered by their desires. Let us cite, by way of example, the best of his fragments, in which, closely following the description of Crete in the *Odyssey* (XIX, 172), he describes the ideal city of Cynicism, which he calls Money-Pouch (Πήρη) :—

“ It is a country called Money-Pouch, in the midst of waves dark with pride, a beautiful and fertile land, surrounded with water, and possessing nothing. Thither shall come neither the vain parasite, nor the shameless debauchee. The island produces thyme, garlic, figs, and wheat bread. Hence there is no strife among the inhabitants on account of its fruits; they carry no arms to win money or glory.”<sup>1</sup>

This poetry originated in a sincere and honorable sentiment: but it had the misfortune, like all parody, of being satisfied with a very artificial form.

<sup>1</sup> Diogenes Laertius, VI, 85; fr. 7, Bergk.

5. **Epic in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries.** **Panyasis; Antimachus; Chærilus.**<sup>1</sup>—Whereas the forms of composition we have just discussed were kept alive because they answered to certain permanent needs, the heroic epic, after having suffered eclipse in the sixth century, reappeared in the fifth without being in any way called for by public opinion. This wholly artificial restoration was the work of a few poetic scholars—rather scholarly than poetic—to whom all the ancient lays seemed sacred, and who thought to atone by artifice for a heroic inspiration that was extinct.

The first in time was an Asiatic Greek, Panyasis of Halicarnassus, an uncle or cousin of Herodotus. The little we know of him is this: Embroiled in the political troubles of his country, an adversary of the tyrant Lygdamis, he was put to death by him, probably in 457. The publication of his epic seems to have been about ten years before his death. A man fond of the old legends and of long mythological narrations, which had not ceased to be in honor in his city, he undertook to recount in verse the whole cycle of the labors of Heracles, already celebrated, two hundred years before, by the Rhodian Pisanter. How he proposed to renew the subject we cannot say. His poem is lost with the exception of some forty verses; and these teach us nothing of its structure. We know only that he related all the adventures of the hero in fourteen books, which formed a total of nine thousand verses. Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintilian praise the beauty of the subject and the skill of the composition. It does not appear, however, that the poet gave proof of great originality. Easy elegance might render agreeable to a certain number of readers the imitation of epic language and of old heroic customs; but the really original qualities which secure immortality for a literary masterpiece were wanting.

About fifty years later in birth, the Ionian Antimachus of Colophon tried a similar enterprise, and seems to have been much superior to his predecessor. He was in possession of his maturest powers and talents at the close of the Peloponnesian War. We know almost nothing of his life or personality; but his works had a fame that makes them still interesting, though lost.

His name is connected chiefly with a *Thebaid*, an immense epic, in which both his merits and defects are manifest. An aristocratic scholar, fond of obscure details, he must have prepared with infinite research to write his poem. Once master of this treasure of antiquities, he had not the resolution needful for sacrificing any part of it. Those who appreciated, above all, elegance and simplicity of

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in the Didot *Hesiod*, and in Kinkel, *Poetarum Epicorum Fragmenta*, vol. I, in the Teubner Collection.



diction preferred Panyasis to him. His narratives were connected together, and seemed to multiply as he advanced. He it is at whom Horace mocks, when, without naming him, he speaks of the poet who goes back to the death of Meleager to tell of the return of Diomed (*A.P.* 136). At the end of his twenty-third book, the Argive chiefs had not yet arrived in front of Thebes. This was the great defect of the work. No more is needed to justify the sharp criticism to which it was subjected in antiquity. But, though he did not know the art of composition, at least he was a poet. He had fire, vigor, movement, and all that constitutes life. He was reproached, it is true, with sometimes having a wordy and obscure style. All in all, however, this is better than platitude and insignificance. He was opposed chiefly by dainty, fastidious artists; but he pleased a few great minds, such as Plato, who probably had regard rather for the substance of poetry. His *Thebaid* was much read for several centuries; and though it finally collapsed under its own weight, it left behind it the fame of having evinced much genius.

As has just been said, Antimachus composed some elegies, as well as his epic. He formed a collection entitled *Lyde*, from the name of a woman celebrated in them. These have the same merits and defects as the *Thebaid*. Though making a pretence of passion, they overflow with scholarship. About his own real or imaginary sentiment, he grouped the legends of a multitude of famous amours. But if he misused his knowledge, he lent it warmth by his merit as a writer. The *Lyde* can be considered as the first example of a new type. It inaugurated the Alexandrian elegy, which is rather narrative than lyric.

Panyasis and Antimachus restored the heroic, mythological epic. Probably they had imitators and rivals in the period we are studying, but none that became distinguished. The men who continued the type belonged to the Alexandrian period, the most illustrious being Apollonius of Rhodes, the author of the *Argonautica*. But by the side of the mythological epic, another form appeared in the fifth century — the epic of historical and contemporary events.

Its principal representative was Chœrilus. He was a Samian. Although the notices concerning the chronology of his life are divergent, it appears certain that he was in mature age about 420. His period of greatest activity extends roughly from 420 to 400. He died not far from 400, at the court of Archelaus of Macedon. His work was called the *Persæid* (Περσική or Περσικά), a tale of the Persian Wars. An expression of Suidas, who calls the poem the "Victory of the Athenians over Xerxes," warrants us in thinking that the battle of Salamis was the centre of the composition, and that the rôle of Athens was

made prominent. But this is all we know. It cannot be doubted, inasmuch as the notices of antiquity lead to the belief, that Chœrilus drew from Herodotus much of the matter of his history. But we cannot say to what extent fiction and the marvellous had part in this historical epic, and so cannot appreciate the poet's effort properly. According to Aristotle, his work abounded in strained and obscure comparisons; the few fragments extant do not tend to weaken this somewhat unfavorable judgment. Yet Chœrilus seems to have obtained some success in his lifetime, possibly because he flattered the national vanity. After his death, he lost favor more and more.

The degree of success this poet attained, did, however, secure him imitators. The historical epic did not at once disappear. In the next century, another Chœrilus seems to have celebrated in epic verse the exploits of Alexander, and afterward, in a second historical epic, the Lamian War. These tame compositions scarcely merit a place in literary history, especially as they are all lost; but they attest the continuance of a type which, in the Alexandrian period, was to be represented, not discredibly, by the *Messenian Women* of Rhianus.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### PHILOSOPHY IN THE FOURTH AND THIRD CENTURIES

1. Athens and Philosophy.
2. Schools of the Second Order.
3. Stoicism : Zeno ; Cleanthes ; Chrysippus.
4. Epicurus and Epicureanism.
5. Pyrrho and Scepticism ; Timon the Sillograph.
6. Middle and New Academies : Arcesilaus and Carneades.

**1. Athens and Philosophy.**—Like comedy, philosophy also continued to be largely Athenian in the period after the death of Alexander. The amount of philosophic thinking done was considerable ; for it was then that the most potent moral doctrines of antiquity, those which have exercised the strongest influence over the life of men, were founded and organized. The philosophers of this period were not, in general, Athenians by birth ; most of them, indeed, were foreigners. But Athens, owing to the splendor of the still existing schools of Plato and Aristotle, continued to be the centre of philosophy. Men came to Athens to listen to the most celebrated philosophers, and to philosophize for themselves. The life and air of Athens was favorable to dialectical discussions. In the sluggishness of politics, in the soft quietude of the decadence, the activity of the Attic mind had need of nourishment. This it found in discussions which suited its acumen and which gradually replaced all other forms of political and oratorical activity. Besides, life at Athens was freer than elsewhere. Kings and generals were not so near at hand ; men preserved an independence of walk and thought favorable to philosophical and moral speculation. Besides the Academy and the Lyceum, other schools were founded. Soon the city was swarming with rival sects, which by spoken or written language contended with each other in the struggle for influence and success. Between Stoics and Epicureans, Academicians and Cynics, quarrels arose much like those of the Franciscans and Dominicans in the Middle Ages. Athens was a great university city, full of students of every age and country, and abounding in subtle words and interminable discussions. The schools of Megara and Cyrene, outside of Athens, maintained a modest provincial existence. Cynicism was, however, rather nomadic. Such exceptions are not, on the whole, numerous ; and one may say that the philosophy of the period is principally

Athenian. Literature, moreover, is indebted to it for very little. This is not due merely to the fact that most of the philosophic writings of the period have perished; for we know from the testimony of ancient writers that these authors either did not wish to produce works of art, or failed to do so. We need not, therefore, study minutely the remains of their works. It will be sufficient to give a rapid sketch of the movement of thought, indicating, as we proceed, the principal literary works connected with it.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Schools of the Second Order.**—Of the schools of Megara and Cyrene, scarcely more than two names deserve mention: that of the Cyrenean Theodorus, who continued, after Aristippus and before Epicurus, to advocate the moral creed of pleasure; and that of the Megarian Stilpo, who was faithful to the subtle dialectic of his masters.

The Cynic school has greater importance, even in literature. Diogenes of Sinope,<sup>2</sup> who slept in a wine-jar, and who asked Alexander to step aside and let him enjoy the full light of the sun, wrote a few works which won some reputation, though we no longer know them. Crates of Thebes, another Cynic of this period, was one of the masters of Zeno.<sup>3</sup> Bion the Borysthenite wrote various works in prose and verse, notably *Dissertations*, which had the honor, on account of their biting wit, to win the attention of Horace and serve as models for his *Satires*.<sup>4</sup> Finally, Menippus of Gadara in Cœle-Syria was also an original writer and an innovator. He wrote various works of parody or droll mockery against Homer, the philosophers, and the scholars, particularly Epicurus. His *Νεκρία* was a parody of that of Homer; his *Letters* dealt with the divinities of the popular religion. His incisive, good-natured sarcasm was expressed in prose and verse in turn, both being used in the same work. This type of composition had so much success that it survived its inventor: the *Menippean Satires* of Varro were an imitation of the writings of Menippus. They are lost to-day, like the original; but Lucian also imitated Menippus, and he is better known. We know the importance he gave to the personage of Menippus in a number of his dialogues; there is no doubt that his clever mockery owes much to that of the philosopher of Gadara. The life of Menippus belongs to the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third.

<sup>1</sup> In chapter XIX we considered the successors of Plato in the Academy and of Aristotle in the Lyceum. On the philosophers whom we are to discuss, see the *Lives* by Diogenes Laertius.

<sup>2</sup> [For Diogenes, see Origen, *Against Celsus*, II; Plutarch, *Alexander*, 14; Diogenes Laertius, II, 47. — Tr.]

<sup>3</sup> On his poems, see above, p. 410.

<sup>4</sup> "Bionæis sermonibus et sale nigro" (Hor., *Ep.* II, 2, 60).



**3. Stoicism: Zeno; Cleanthes; Chrysippus.** — Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, was the pupil, it is said, of the Cynic Crates; and it is certain that the Stoic, by his scorn for weakness, his somewhat rude independence, and his haughty language, has some traits of Cynicism, for which, in general, he shows sympathy. But the Cynic is generally an ignorant man, who cares little for practical life; the Stoic, on the contrary, is a cultivated, subtle reasoner, who founds his morals upon a whole metaphysical system. Stoicism, like Platonism or Aristotelianism, is a complete doctrine. Notwithstanding its paradoxes and whims, it is one of the profoundest in certain ways — or at any rate one of the most highly moral — to be met with in the history of human thinking.<sup>1</sup>

The founders of Stoicism are Zeno of Citium (a Phœnician colony in Cyprus), Cleanthes of Assos in Mysia, and Chrysippus of Soli in Cilicia. Zeno and Cleanthes were contemporary; the former was born about 336, the latter about 331. Chrysippus, a pupil of Cleanthes, belongs to another generation; he was born about 280, and lived till the closing years of the third century. It will be noticed that none of them are Athenians by birth; Zeno and Cleanthes are provincials, almost non-Hellenic, and of modest origins. Zeno came to Athens to follow his profession; Cleanthes began as an athlete. They were strangers to Athenian traditions, to the fine culture of a Plato. They were serious, ardent, and not deeply interested in art. The part of each in the organization of Stoicism can be briefly summarized: Zeno was the initiator; and Cleanthes, first as a colleague and then as a successor, finished and consolidated the work; but Chrysippus was the “doctor imperturbable,” the resourceful debater who gave the system its breadth, defended it against attacks, and fortified it for all time with an exhaustless store of arguments. Zeno wrote a few works, though not many; he affected scorn of rhetoric, and aimed only at brevity. Cleanthes was a more fertile writer. Besides numerous treatises in prose, of which almost nothing remains, he composed some poems. His *Hymn to Zeus*, which we may still read, is an interesting composition. Its poetry is grave, strictly adhering to the orthodoxy of the system, on the whole of slight literary merit, yet pretty enough for the religious turn of the thought. This is curiously combined with a semi-Stoic, semi-Homeric terminology. Chrysippus is the St. Thomas Aquinas of Stoicism. His seven or eight hundred writings were a real summary of the doctrine. On him

<sup>1</sup> Zeno was wont to gather his disciples in the painted porch, *Στοὰ ποικίλη*; hence the doctrine was called “Stoic,” and the school, “The Porch.” The fragments of the Stoics are found principally in the writings which Plutarch composed to refute their teaching. On Cleanthes, see Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* I. 151 ff. See Ravaisson, *Essai sur le stoïcisme*, Paris, 1856.

was composed the ironical verse: "No Porch without Chrysippus." We have numerous fragments of his works. Apparently they were not really artistic; they were filled with numberless citations of poets and writers of every sort, and bristled with dialectic.

What was, then, this celebrated doctrine, which attracted so many excellent minds, especially in the Roman period? We cannot give an exposition of all its phases, even summarily, for it is too complex. It includes a logic, or preliminary science of the conditions of knowledge; a physics, or science of existence; and a morals, or science of morality. The system owes much to Heraclitus. The general idea of it can be summarized thus: The individual, the particular, has its existence only in and through the whole, which is the world; and the world itself, through its incessant transformations, is conducted by unchanging laws (*ἡ εἰμαρμένη*) which are the expression of divine thought, the world-soul. The soul of man is a portion of the divine soul. Reason in man is the directing element (*τὸ ἡγεμονικόν*), alone capable of grasping the laws of the universe of things, and bringing individual conduct into conformity therewith. Happiness, which is the natural end of the individual's action, can be realized only by complete submission to the universal laws of the world, as recognized by reason. This submission constitutes virtue. The sage considers virtue as the only real good. All the rest, health or sickness, riches or poverty, is indifferent (*ἀδιάφορον*). Duty (*τὸ καθήκον*) is the source of perfect happiness. When the sage is permeated with such ideas, he attains absolute serenity (*ἀταραξία*), the necessary condition of happiness. Apart from duty and wisdom, there is only misery — a profound misery, without distinction of degrees; for all faults, in the end, are equal, inasmuch as they all equally lead a man away from happiness.

It is easy to rail at Stoicism and say, for example, with Cicero, that the Stoic is a man who puts in the same rank the crime of killing one's father and that of killing a cock;<sup>1</sup> or with Horace: —

Ad summum, sapiens uno minor est Jove, dives,  
Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum,  
Præcipue sanus, nisi cum pituita molesta est.<sup>2</sup>

But it is juster and more interesting to recognize what humanity owes to these bold thinkers, to these sublime, though rather droll, dialecticians. Always thoroughly Greek in the intellectual character of their doctrine, in their conception of the part of reason in

<sup>1</sup> *Pro Murena*, 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* I, i, 106. ["In short, the Sage is inferior to only Jove; he is rich, free, honored, favored, a king of kings, in every way sensible — except, perhaps, in the matter of his phlegm." — Tr.]

their dialectic, even in their bold use of paradox; yet how novel they are in the capital affirmation that between the morally good and all else there is no common ground! Moral good is everything. Neither Aristotle nor Plato went so far. It is the idea of the absolute, — a fact we must not fail to recognize, — entering, with all its grandeur and all its dangers, for the first time into the world.

**4. Epicurus and Epicureanism.** — Epicureanism appeared at the same time as Stoicism; and in almost every sense it was its direct counterpart.

Epicurus, the founder of the school, was an Athenian.<sup>1</sup> He was born in 342. At first he was a schoolmaster in various Greek cities. The *Theogony* of Hesiod appeared to him absurd; but the system of Democritus enchanted him. At the age of about thirty he had formulated his doctrine, and came to Athens to teach it in 306. He was accustomed to assemble a few friends in a little garden that he had bought; and the "Garden" of Epicurus became the rival of the Academy, the Porch, and the Lyceum. His character, though fiercely attacked by his enemies, appears to have been altogether praiseworthy; whatever one thinks of his doctrine, the man was excellent, full of gentleness and amiability. He lived in close intimacy with his friends, particularly Metrodorus, who so nearly resembled him that in antiquity it was not unusual to reproduce their likenesses together in a double bust. He educated his slave, Mys, in philosophy, and treated him as a son. His testament is of great nobility. It is Epicurus who wrote: "A deceased friend is still a pleasant memory;" and "It is better to give than to receive." He did not sanction community of goods like Pythagoras; "True friends," he said, "ought to be so sure of each other as not to need to be common proprietors of an undivided property." He died in 270, leaving a considerable quantity of writings, and a flourishing school.

Of his writings there remain, besides some fragments, two long philosophic letters and a *résumé* of the principal Epicurean maxims (*Κίρπαι δόξαι*) made by himself or one of his disciples. These writings had no literary pretensions; he scorned dialectic and was interested only in the practical conduct of life. In a style brief, sententious, filled with the terms of the schools, he was occupied above all in offering his disciples a catechism which they might learn by heart and follow literally. He had no taste for speculation; and no school was less speculative than his, or less intellectual. In this respect he broke away from the tendencies of Hellenism. His

<sup>1</sup> Texts in Usener, *Epicurea*, Leipsic, 1887. Consult: Guyau, *La Morale d'Epicure*, Paris, 1878.

doctrine once established, every one adhered to it without the least mental reaction. Epicureanism, as an ancient writer said, had no sects; a rigorous orthodoxy was fully sufficient for minds so little exigent, for men more eager to attain practical happiness than to undertake free research.

Yet there was an Epicurean doctrine, comprising a logic, a system of the universe, and a morals. Logic, or *canonic* (κανόν, τὸ κανονικόν), established the principle that all knowledge comes from sensation. Hence the universe can be conceived only as a whole composed of sensible things. The physics of Democritus, which reduced existence to atoms, was the one best suited to Epicurus. He adopted it in its main features. He added apparently only two elements, and these are in no way of a scientific nature: a theory of the κλίναμεν, that famous "declension" of the atoms which admits that, without one's knowing why, they deviated from the vertical in their eternal fall, and were drawn together to form the different bodies; then the theory of chance, according to which no necessity, no determinism, not even any divine thought, presides over the growth of objects; and that this growth results from a fortuitous combination of circumstances. The puerile notion is really the negation of all science. But Epicurus had at heart the eradication of the Stoic εἰμαρμένη, which seemed to him, like the doctrine of Providence, essentially contrary to the serenity of the sage (ἀταραξία). He did not deny the existence of the gods; but, like Democritus, he accorded them no part in the conduct of the universe. The soul is only a subtler substance infused into the body proper. Morals has for its object the pursuit of happiness. This, like all the rest, is discernible by sensation. Superstitious fear once having been removed, man needs only to seek agreeable sensations to be happy. Epicurus said this again and again with intentional, premeditated crudity; he did not shrink from astonishing his reader, or even offending him. Does it follow that man is to abandon himself to his passions, and blindly follow, like the beasts, his instinct of pleasure? No. There are immediate pleasures for which we atone later by suffering. Wisdom consists in propriety of choice; and thus, in the end, Epicurus gradually introduced into his system most of the practical rules of ordinary ethics.

It cannot be said, then, that his morals must necessarily result in immorality. His example, and that of his principal disciples, is sufficient proof. They were prudent, gentle to others as well as to themselves, and thoroughly well-meaning. Yet it is no less certain that the doctrine, on the whole, was dangerous. It is always dangerous to take away the notion of duty. Ordinary and merely medi-



oere natures let themselves slip down along the declivity; and, in fact, if not in good logic, morality itself is compromised. Here, again, the history of Epicureanism is instructive. By the side of intelligent, moderate Epicureanism there was a vulgar type, which was manifested in literature as well as in life. It abstracted from literature much of its energy and nobility, and was certainly one of the most powerful solvents of ancient character.

**5. Pyrrho and Scepticism; Timon the Sillograph.** — So many contradictory affirmations, equally categorical, coming from Stoicism and Epicureanism, to say nothing of the ancient schools, could give rise only to a sceptical reaction. This was the work of Pyrrho of Elis.

He was born about 360, and died about 270; and was first a painter, then a disciple of the philosophy of Democritus, and finally a teacher of scepticism to his countrymen.<sup>1</sup> He followed the path of happiness, like all his contemporaries. But an examination of doctrines convinced him that neither the reason of the Stoics nor the sensation of Epicurus could bring about that end. The truth, in short, in every order of things, was inaccessible to man. He had reached an easy decision. To know how not to know was, in his eyes, the supreme wisdom. He would have said gladly, with Montaigne, that doubt is a "soft pillow for a well-made head." His instruction aimed to make his disciples understand that true happiness consisted in not being anxious concerning things which one cannot know. To be happy, man needed only to practise suspension of judgment, the famous *ἐποχή* so often mentioned, since Pyrrho, in philosophical discussions.

He wrote nothing, and so the scepticism he originated would elude the history of literature, if he had not had as a disciple Timon of Phlius.

Timon, a talented prose-writer and poet, was born toward the close of the fourth century.<sup>2</sup> It is said that he was at first a dancer. He then listened to Stilpo of Megara, and afterward to Pyrrho, whose doctrines he accepted. He led a wandering life. He appears to have followed the profession of a sophist by giving oratorical entertainments in all parts of the Greek world, but especially at Athens. He knew the most illustrious of his contemporaries. Antigonus Gonatas and Ptolemy Philadelphus testify to his kindly spirit. He died at the age of ninety, leaving a great name behind, because of his numerous writings in prose and verse. His prose works are unknown to us. His poems belonged to the most varied

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Brochard, *Pyrrhon et le scepticisme primitif* (Rev. Philos., May, 1885).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* I, p. 83 ff.

types, but one of the most celebrated was a philosophic poem called *Railleries* (Σάλλοι), of which we have about a hundred and forty verses. It is a satirical review of the systems, ridiculing them in a sort of *Νεκυία* apparently, which described the death of their authors. The obituaries of the philosophers have the merit of being ingenious, and of coming from a man who knew the subject-matter of which he treated. Most of the little medallions are as pleasing as instructive. His pun on the Museum at Alexandria, which he called the "pigeon-house of the Muses," is celebrated. There is nothing insignificant in the whole series of lively, short pictures.

After Timon, the school of Pyrrho seems to have vanished. There is no school of real scepticism till much later, the time of Ænesidemus; nor is there any evident affiliation between the two schools. Yet Pyrrho's spirit did not disappear without leaving any impression; curiously enough, in the third century the school of Plato adopted it. The probability of the Middle and the New Academy is derived, in part at least, from Pyrrhonism.

**6. The Middle and the New Academy: Arcesilaus and Carneades.** — The Middle Academy is best represented by Arcesilaus (315–241 roughly), who was scholarch about 260; and the New Academy by Carneades (215–129), who was scholarch a century later. The list of scholarchs includes between the two men only obscure names. The doctrinal differences between the Middle and New Academies are very slight, and can be explained only by a minute analysis. On the contrary, they agree on a capital point in which they differ widely from Plato. They declare that man cannot attain absolute truth, that the sage must suspend his judgment concerning the essence of things, and must be content, in practical life, with probability, which results principally from a logic of discourse, as it were. The Middle and New Academies employed the logic of discourse in the service of Platonic morals, which was despoiled of its most original features, and became simply a purified form of current morality. How could the school of Plato reach this semi-sceptic attitude? More easily than would seem possible at first glance. Plato himself made the possession of truth depend on a knowledge of pure Ideas, and saw simply opinions in our judgments concerning sensible things. When the theory of the Ideas was shaken, as happened even in the second generation of the school, nothing substantial remained. The categorical dogmatism of the Stoics and the scepticism of Pyrrho hastened the movement, each in its own way; Arcesilaus, in fact, combated the excesses of the former with arguments borrowed from the latter, and thenceforth the theory of probability reigned in the Academy. Probability had great success, owing to

its own character and to the talent of its defenders. Arcesilaus was an ardent, clever disputant, cunning and incomprehensible, ingenious and pungent on occasion, as much loved by his disciples as detested by his enemies. Carneades was no less subtle, and had excellent oratorical gifts—a powerful voice, vivid imagination, and a warmth which carried away his auditors. In 156, the Athenians appointed him ambassador to the Roman Senate, to plead their cause against the inhabitants of Sicily. He profited by his residence at Rome to give there what are called to-day “lectures.” He took for his subject, “Justice.” One day he proved that it existed, and the next day that it did not. Such skilful oratory offended the old Romans. Yet Cicero was a disciple of the New Academy. Probability, in fact, is a doctrine that must please a great lawyer. Confined within prudent limits and tempered by serious considerations arising from the necessities of conduct, it leads to a very useful theory of prudence in assertion.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it was not thus that its inventors seem to have understood it. Greek subtlety had an innate tendency toward sophism, particularly in the free play of dispute in the schools, where speculation knew no limits. The New Academy, in fact, often indulged in sophistry, and often seemed to resemble Protagoras rather than Plato.

The dominant traits of this philosophic evolution from the fourth to the second century are, in all the schools, the gradual abandonment of metaphysics and the preponderance of morals, to which all tended; and in morals, two great systems. One was austere and sublime, the strong aliment of a narrow, élite class; the other was easier and more seductive. Comprehended to a greater or less degree, the latter tended to put men's wills to sleep and free their minds from labor. Incidentally there was a brilliant school of semi-philosophic discussion. Evidently, beneath its specious, external appearance, this philosophy was leading the Greek world imperceptibly to its decadence.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Martha, *Le Philosophe Carneade à Rome*, in his *Études morales sur l'antiquité*.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### RHETORIC AND ERUDITION AFTER ALEXANDER

(FROM 300 TO ABOUT 150)

1. Hellenism after Alexander. The New Intellectual Capitals: Alexandria, Pergamon, Antioch, etc.
2. Rhetoric.
3. History.
4. Geography.
5. History of Philosophy, Letters, and Fine Arts.
6. Philology and Grammar.
7. Technology.
8. Semi-Romantic Literature.
9. Jewish-Greek and Apocryphal Literature.

**1. Hellenism after Alexander. The New Intellectual Capitals: Alexandria, Pergamon, Antioch, etc.** — Comedy and philosophy, as we have seen, continued to flourish in the third century in the atmosphere of Athens as in a salubrious climate. They were like two delicate plants refusing to become acclimated under foreign skies. But this was not true of Greek culture in general, for that was spread by the conquests of Alexander throughout the Oriental and Mediterranean regions; and as the relish for literature was an essential trait of Hellenism, literature, in one form or another, was cultivated wherever, following the arms of Macedon, Hellenic colonies became established. New kingdoms, arising from the division of Alexander's empire, were finally organized. New cities were founded, and some of the old cities of Asia were transformed and enlarged. They had Greek princes, a court, a brilliant society, libraries, schools, and culture of every sort. Alexandria, Pergamon, Antioch, had become great political and commercial centres, and were also intellectual capitals.

Alexandria is the most complete and brilliant type of the new capitals. It is also the one whose influence over literature was exercised with the greatest continuity; and so very naturally the period comprised between the death of Alexander and the battle of Actium is called, in the history of Greek literature, the Alexandrian Period.

Between the canal of Pharos and Lake Mareotis, on a long strip of land, there once lay an obscure Egyptian city. Alexander perceived the unique advantages of the location, and founded Alexandria there. Fifty years later, under the first of the Ptolemies, the young city had more than three hundred thousand inhabitants; it



was the greatest city in the world. Its prodigious growth, resembling that of certain American cities to-day, had its origin in commerce. Alexandria lay at the point of contact of the great civilizations of antiquity, which had been suddenly brought together by the conquests of Alexander. Egypt, the Orient, Greece, and the Western Mediterranean, had their rendezvous in its immense port. The Ptolemies were intelligent and ambitious. When they saw that their capital had become the wealthiest city of the world, they wished it to be also the most highly cultured and literary. Ptolemy Soter had already begun to collect a library. But apparently it was Philadelphus who founded it definitely and completed it by adding the Museum. At his death, the great library contained four hundred thousand volumes; and another, established in the Serapeum, contained fifty thousand. These figures did not stop increasing till, in the year 47, the time of the fire succeeding Cæsar's entry into the city, the total had reached seven hundred thousand volumes. The Museum was consecrated to the Muses, as its name indicates. A high priest had charge of it. Numerous edifices were built beside it and associated with it. One such, probably, served as a domicile for the great library. Others contained dissecting rooms and astronomical observatories. In the gardens were rare animals and exotic plants. Porches ran around the whole group of buildings. By following these, one reached an elegant structure in which were two important halls: one was the Exedra, which served as a place of reunion for scholars connected with the Museum; the other was their dining hall. In fact, a numerous coterie lived beneath the shadow of the Museum, which resembled an abbey, a university, and an academy at once. It was really all the Muses that the kings of Egypt entertained in this fine palace. "Pigeonhouse of the Muses" is the nickname bestowed upon it by the satirist Timon. The expression is satirical; but who can say that it is wholly unjust? The Muses naturalized at Alexandria were no longer, it is true, quite the same as the Muses of Helicon. They sang no longer for the same public, nor did they utter the same notes.

Till then, Greek literature in its principal forms had been profoundly national and popular. It was now to become cosmopolitan and polished. For centuries it had been the spontaneous expression of those ideas and sentiments by which the city was nourished. It was addressed particularly to the inhabitants of Athens, and to them all, without distinction of class or culture. Even the philosophy of Socrates, which attained a universal character, was both profoundly Athenian in its principal features and popular in its mode of expression. Socrates was an Athenian talking to the first comers among

his countrymen. In poetry and oratory, the national popular character is still more clearly marked. But after Alexander's conquests, literature was addressed to the cultured and educated classes throughout the world, and to them almost exclusively. The multitude was no longer considered. Whether a book were written at Alexandria or Pergamon made little difference; it was still the same. It was written by cosmopolitan scholars for readers of the same sort, and interested only the universal yet restricted circle of educated men, that lived in the various cities of the Greek world and possessed everywhere the same culture. The people did not know them nor they the people. In many of the newly Hellenized cities, the multitude remained semi-barbarous, speaking the language of commerce, a Greek full of solecisms. Even in the land of the Greek race, when local political life had disappeared, when the ordinary outlook of the cultured was toward a vaster horizon, a schism was brought about between the educated and the common crowd. A scholar of Tauromenium was much nearer in thought to a scholar of Athens or Alexandria than to his ignorant countrymen. The poets aimed to win the favor of literary circles throughout the world rather than that of their immediate fellow-citizens, as these were engrossed with the humble cares of a life of business, amid which lofty thinking scarcely had a place.

This polished universal character of the literature was manifest in both substance and form. To say nothing of poetry, which we shall treat in a later chapter, certain prose types disappeared, others were transformed, and still others made their appearance for the first time. In all of them, the language, the style, the fundamental inspiration, assumed a new character. Philosophy, as we have seen, was confined almost to Athens, and need not be discussed further. Real oratory disappeared for want of interest and occasions; there remained only rhetoric and the oratory of declamation. Among the types which had become important in Attic prose, only history continued suitable for a book-loving public. In fact, it flourished then more abundantly than ever. One might almost say that it went rampant; for every one wrote books of history, good or bad. Not only were the old forms preserved, but new ones arose — the history of art, artists, authors, philosophers, and scholars. Besides old and new forms of history, all branches of knowledge were cultivated with extreme ardor, mathematics, physics, natural sciences, medicine; then disciplines either wholly new or so enlarged as virtually to be renewed, such as grammar, philology, and musical technique. In every direction there was diligent research, a universal and intense desire to understand the things of nature and humanity, present conditions and those of the past. Men read, compiled,

observed, coördinated, made summaries. The passion for knowledge was so universal as to be manifest even among those who were strictly poets. The majority of the great Alexandrian poets were scholars as well. Erudition was characteristic of the period, distinguishing it from all others. There is something grand in this search for knowledge. The Alexandrians wished to take an inventory of the past of Greece and of the contemporary world. It was a noble ambition, still worthy of the Greek spirit, and we must be thankful for it. Yet it must be owned that the past lay beyond their ken. Excepting some few men of genius, most of them lacked certain of the qualities of scholarship. In their immense productivity, there was more compilation than research, and little criticism or true philosophy. In the literature of the time there were still more serious imperfections. We have little more than its débris, but we get a very clear impression of it. Among so many prose writers, there were but few artists, few men with a characteristic and original manner of stating the impression made on them by their environment. One may praise their diligence as scholars, yet scarcely their literary talent. They were laborious workers, rather than original writers. The fault cannot be wholly imputed to themselves; the subjects which they treated often afforded only moderate opportunity for clearness and correctness. These qualities, too, they often possessed. They wrote a somewhat artificial language, a cosmopolitan Attic called the "common dialect" (*κοινή διάλεκτος*), which was the language of the educated in every land of Hellenic culture. They employed it with sufficient cleverness to please and instruct their contemporaries. They could not give their style a personal impress, either because they had no marked individuality or had no occasion to display it. All their literature is essentially bookish. All the men of the period had a certain community of general culture, which permitted even mediocre minds to become scholars, and tended to efface personal distinctions. Most of them, too, largely cut off from political and social activity, were limited by circumstances to a somewhat narrow specialty, in which their heart was scarcely interested. Their genius could display itself perhaps in the discoveries it made, but not in its form of expression.

We need not give the list of these fastidious productions, as they are now forgotten. The really important thing is to describe the activity as a whole, outline its principal tendencies, and note incidentally the names and works that seem to have opened a new path or left an unusually clear trace of themselves in the memory of men, owing to their originality or their talent.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A capital work on all the writers of this period is Susemihl, *Geschichte der gr. Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit*, 2 vols., Leipsic, 1891-1892.

**2. Rhetoric.** — The Alexandrian period is not simply one of lifelessness for oratory in the strict sense, but marks also a veritable eclipse of rhetoric. Between the rhetoric of Attica and that of Rome, there is no break of continuity; for we know the names of numerous teachers and schools then flourishing. But there was a distinction in brilliance and influence. Rhetoric was not in vogue. Men preferred works of erudition. This is not really a misfortune. The precepts of Isocrates on hiatus, oratorical rhythm, and nobility of style continued to be taught, and were put in practice more or less correctly by a number of writers. But this was mere rhetorical exercise, not literature. The only name worthy of mention is that of Hegesias of Magnesia, who lived in the middle of the third century, and whose innovations exercised some influence.<sup>1</sup> But the influence was unhappy; he founded the first "Asiatic" school, a school noteworthy for pretension, for the absence of true ideas and sentiments, and its search for conceits and false lights of every sort. He had used such a style of writing in several works, notably a *History of Alexander the Great*, which Dionysius of Halicarnassus already censured as showing bad taste. That critic justified his censure by citing a page that certainly merits his severity. But Hegesias was applauded and imitated. His influence is manifest in the historian Timæus. The definite reaction against him did not come till almost the end of the second century.

**3. History.** — History was more serious, though making some concessions to the offensive fashion. It generally showed interest, wide information, extensive reading, and some criticism. Its most noticeable fault was with respect to the feeling for reality, the comprehension of politics and war. Too many historians of the time were only book-worms, who, in default of personal observation, had not even true fondness for the subjects which they treated, and were more disposed to use them as occasions to display rhetoric or erudition than as objects of scientific study.

Exception must be made, however, in favor of a few generals or statesmen who wrote memoirs of the events in which they had taken part, and so patterned after the author of the *Anabasis*. However, though our knowledge of them is very slight, it does not seem that they were really writers.

Among this group we meet Ptolemy Soter, the lieutenant of Alexander who became king of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> He wrote a *History of Alexander*, often cited with favor by Arrian. We may mention also

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Müller, after those of Arrian, in his *Fragments of the Historians of Alexander*, pp. 138-144.

<sup>2</sup> Fragments in Müller, *sup. cit.*



Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, author of *Memoirs*, now lost; Aratus of Sicyon, general of the Achæan League, and author of voluminous *Memoirs* (thirty books), whose style Plutarch censures, but whose veracity Polybius commends; and Hannibal, the celebrated Carthaginian general, author of a few historical works in Greek, — memoirs also, no doubt, which consequently deserve mention.

Besides this first group of writings, of not much importance all in all, the historical literature of the time is extremely abundant and varied. In order to get one's bearings, it is indispensable to arrange the names and works in a few general groups.

1. The collections of material can scarcely be regarded as historical works, but they were highly useful. Aristotle's example had given a lively impulse to such writings. In the third and second centuries they were multiplied to infinity. The Macedonian Craterus, son of the general of Alexander, made a *Collection of the Degrees of the Athenian People*. The historian Philochorus published a *Collection of Attic Inscriptions*. Books were written *On Games*, *On Sacrifices*, *On Festivals*; also "*Miscellanies*," "*Notes*," etc., on a thousand particular subjects. Demetrius of Scepsis, at the beginning of the second century, wrote a great work in thirty books entitled *Catalogue of the Trojans*, an inexhaustible storehouse of information on the antiquities of the Troad.

2. Other writings, though more closely resembling historical narratives, were still scarcely literary. Such are *chronicles*, *journals*, and numerous *ephemerides* of every sort. The *Ephemerides of Alexander* (βασιλείοι ἐφημερίδες), the official diary of the campaign, edited by two eyewitnesses, Eumenes of Cardia and Diodotus of Erythraæ, were somewhat like the *Mémoires de Dangeau* of Macedonian epic. We find also the *Halting-places of Alexander*, by Beto and Diognetus; the *Halting-places in Asia*, by Amyntas; the *Chronology* (Χρόνων ἀναγραφὴ) of Sosibius; the *Chronography* (Περὶ χρονογραφιῶν) of the great geographer Eratosthenes, a work in which important theories seem chiefly to have been propounded; and very numerous local chronicles, particularly the *Atthids*, or *Chronicles of Athens*, in the style of the early writer Hellanicus. There were authors of *Atthids* throughout the fourth century. At the end of the fourth and the beginning of the third, the most celebrated were Philochorus, a soothsayer by profession, who was scholarly but uncritical; and Istrus, a pupil of Callimachus, whose work, in sixteen books, was a rich source of information.<sup>1</sup> Other writers undertook to inform Greece about the neighboring peoples. The *Chronicles of Chaldaea* (Χαλδαϊκά) and the *Chronicles of Egypt* (Αἰγυπτιακά) pass respectively as the

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Müller, *Fr. Hist. Græc.* I, p. 371 ff.

works of the Chaldæan Berosus, priest of Bel, and of the Egyptian Manetho, priest of the temple of Sebennytus, who were said to have lived about the end of the fourth century. In reality, the works were probably written by two Hellenized Orientals of the end of the second century B.C.<sup>1</sup>

3. Political biography appeared with the work of Idomeneus of Lampsacus, a disciple of Epicurus, *On the Athenian Demagogues*. It was one of the principal sources of the pseudo-Plutarch in his *Lives of the Ten Orators*, but a rather confused source, it would seem.

About the same time, the Peripatetic philosopher Dicæarchus, celebrated chiefly as a geographer, tried to present, in his *Life of Hellas* (Βίος Ἑλλάδος), a general view of Greek customs. His account was often praised by the ancients. In his treatise on the *Laws of Sparta*, he gave a similar account of life in that city.<sup>2</sup>

4. We come at last to the traditional form of history, which recounts as a totality the great events in the life of a people. Here again, in the abundance of writings, it is necessary to distinguish the principal lines along which the activity of historians is directed. Timæus of Tauromenium is the most celebrated, and the only one whom we shall really study, in trying to discern the essential features of this historical art.

The expedition of Alexander, which had already given occasion for memoirs, chronicles, and diaries, was destined to excite the interest of historians as well. It offered fine material—dangerous, though, owing to its very beauty—for writers more imbued with the rhetorical than the scientific spirit, especially as they were addressing readers on the alert for fascination. This material was treated by a large number of historians, of whom few merit mention.<sup>3</sup> Aristobulus, who accompanied the expedition, undertook to give an account of it in his old age. Arrian commends him, for being, with Ptolemy, the most truthful historian of the campaign. The few fragments still extant prove that he possessed a fine mind, wary of the marvellous and even the theatrical. Chares of Mitylene, chamberlain of Alexander, had been initiated by his functions into the daily life of the court. His work, in at least ten books, tended to occupy itself with court affairs. He seems to have patterned after Herodotus. Onesicritus, a disciple of the philosopher

<sup>1</sup> *Fr. Hist. Græc.* II, pp. 495–616. Cf. E. Havet, *Mémoire sur les écrits qui portent les noms de Béroze et de Manéthon*. Paris, Hachette, 1873.

<sup>2</sup> *Fr. Hist. Græc.* II, pp. 489–494; Müller, *Geographi Græci Minores*, I, pp. 97–110; II, pp. 238–243.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. C. Müller, *Fragments of the Historians of Alexander* (after the fragments from Arrian).

Diogenes, also took part in the expedition. He went to India as chief pilot of the fleet under Nearchus. He was regarded in antiquity as a babbler. One of his fragments, recounting a pretended conversation of his with the Indian "gymnosophists," or fakirs, certainly comes from a talented, even clear-sighted, observer. Callisthenes, the nephew of Aristotle, whom Alexander put to death as a conspirator, had begun to write the *History of Alexander*. He also left a work called *Hellenica*. The pretended conspirator, curiously enough, wrote a history filled with flattery and rhetoric. To him there was later attributed a *Life of Alexander* still extant; but it is unauthentic, and is, in any case, a mere fabrication of absurdities. The other historians of Alexander, Clitarchus, Anaximenes of Lampascus, and Hegesias of Magnesia, the rhetorician above named, scarcely deserve mention.

After the history of Alexander, that of his successors, the *διάδοχοι*, and that of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, were written. The best-known historian of this group is Hieronymus of Cardia, whose *History of the Successors* and *History of the Epigoni* (including Pyrrhus) seem to have been the principal sources of Diodorus and Plutarch for this period. His reputation as a writer was mediocre.

Other historians recounted the history of Italy from the earliest times to the First Punic War. We know only their names and a few insignificant details. The best known of these historians were Philinus and Sosylus.

The history of Greece proper, with that of Sicily, which is inseparable from it, had called forth more important works.<sup>1</sup> Several writers of this group deserve mention. Diyllus of Athens wrote a *History of Greece and Sicily*, in twenty-seven books, which was a sequel to the work of Ephorus. He is otherwise little known. Demochares, a nephew of Demosthenes and an orator also, wrote, more as rhetorician than historian, an account of contemporary Athens. Douris of Samos, his contemporary, composed, in addition to various minor works, two great historical treatises: a *History of Greece and Macedon* in twenty-eight or thirty books; and a *History of Agathocles*, completing his great design. He seems to have been a man of good judgment, exempt from political passion, fond of simplicity in style and of piquant, expressive anecdotes. Phylarchus, a contemporary of Aratus of Sicyon (second half of the second century), author of a great work in twenty-eight books on the period of about seventy years from the beginning of the reign of Pyrrhus to the death of Ptolemy Euergetes, was a biassed historian of politics. — according to Polybius, — but fond of describing manners and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Müller, *Fr. Hist. Græc.* II.

relating anecdotes. He wrote in an easy style, if one may form a judgment from his fragments. Finally, Timæus of Tauromenium is the most celebrated of all, the one from whom we can obtain the clearest idea of their characteristics as a class.<sup>1</sup>

He was born about the middle of the fourth century, and lived nearly a hundred years, till the middle of the third. He brought down his account almost to the date of his death. Driven from Tauromenium, his native city, by Agathocles, tyrant of Syracuse, he came to Athens, lived there almost half a century, and returned to pass his closing years in Sicily, probably at Syracuse, where Hiero II was reigning. His two greatest works were a *History of Sicily* and afterward a *History of Pyrrhus*. The narrative began with the origins of Sicily, and closed with the opening of the First Punic War, in 264. Of this vast composition, we have only some disappointing fragments; but the long diatribes hurled against him by Polybius enable us to form a rather good idea of him,—even to defend him somewhat against his accuser, who evidently spoke in polemic more, sometimes, than in criticism.

The great merit of Timæus, on which we must insist at once, was his immense learning. He had read everything, and particularly the collections of original documents, whose value he could well appreciate. He was very independent of his predecessors, and judged them with a sanity that was often commended. He had good sense and moderation. He did not magnify his numbers like Ephorus; and in relating matters of antiquity, he seems to have adhered literally to the legends. Hence Polybius accuses him of falsity and superstition; but perhaps his work is of more value than the awkwardly rationalistic interpretations of the school of Ephorus. His exactness in chronology was famous and deserves praise: into the chaos of systems then in use, he tried to put order and lucidity; he established the relations between them and subordinated all to that of the Olympiads. Though Polybius derides his minuteness, he was the first to profit thereby; and no one, after Timæus, dared to transgress the rules he had established in this important matter.

Notwithstanding considerable merits, he had grave defects, which at times obscured them. He knew nothing about war and had not travelled. He knew only books; his education was wholly bookish (*βιβλικὴ ζῆσις*, says Polybius). He was like a physician studying diseases from books only, or a painter copying only manikins (*σεσαγμένοι θύλακοι*).<sup>2</sup> He understood nothing of the things he described and sometimes made his account unintelligible. Besides he was hindered by fine writing; though scorning declamation, he employed

<sup>1</sup> *Fr. Hist. Græc.* I, pp. 193–233.

<sup>2</sup> Polybius, XII, 25 h, 2.



in history all the bad habits of the rhetoricians. His only concern was to bestow blame or praise. Both his eulogies and his attacks go beyond measure, and are mere silly declamations. The speeches he puts into the mouths of his characters are neither political nor reasonable. Certain fragments justify largely the reproach of Polybius. His style, too, shows traces of the same bad taste. The best ancient critics, such as Longinus and Cicero, did not deny his talent, but considered it Asiatic, like that of Hegesias, which was sullied by pretension and fine writing.

In the time of Polybius, he had the general reputation of being the foremost of historians; and Polybius himself at first believed in his preëminence. Nothing shows better the great decadence of history in this period, and the importance of the revolution made by Polybius in the next century.

4. **Geography.** — On the contrary, geography, that annex of history, then made great progress in descriptive and mathematical lines. The conquests of Alexander and the extension of commerce opened horizons unknown to the Greek mind. New lands were described, a more methodical study was made of ancient Greece, and the progress of exact science led certain minds to form a juster idea of the earth as a whole. Much, indeed, of the geographical progress was not properly literary, and belongs rather to the history of science. Yet descriptive geography, at least, admitted of more than a mere exposition of facts and figures: it was conceived as a complete picture of the lands it described, and space was given to customs, ideas, legends, and a summary account of the past. A writer, consequently, could display his talent in the treatment of this rich subject-matter by the coloring and relief of his picture. Unfortunately, we possess only débris of these works, and generally do not even know whether the ancients attributed to them any merit aside from the interest of the subjects. It is probable, however, that their artistic merit was slight, as in most prose-writings of the time. The prose-writers were learned and scholarly — more interested in things than in words, except for being irritated by rhetoric. And that is worse than not knowing it at all. We may confine ourselves, accordingly, to a brief characterization.<sup>1</sup>

In descriptive geography, we find first the explorers who described new lands. Nearchus, the admiral of Alexander, recounted in his *Ἡπειρώς* the descent of the Indus and his voyage along the coast of the Indian Ocean as far as the Euphrates. Megasthenes, who is sometimes ranged among the historians of Alexander, is a geographer

<sup>1</sup> Consult: C. Müller-Didot, *Geographi Graeci Minores*; and Marcel Didot, *Essai sur la géographie de Strabon*, Paris, 1801.

in the broader sense of the word. Sent several times by Seleucus Nicator to the Indian prince Sandracotta, he had the opportunity for seeing India closely, and embodied the result of his researches and observations in a work entitled *Ἰνδικά*. It was the model for many analogous writings. Pytheas of Massilia, who had visited the Atlantic coast from Gades to the British Isles, published notes of his voyage in a treatise, *Περὶ Ὠκεανοῦ*. All these geographers were judged very diversely by their successors, sometimes with a severity traceable to differences in their point of view, and in no way justified. Megasthenes seems to have been sincere and studious; and Pytheas made scientific observations of permanent value.

Others described with novel precision the lands already known. Timosthenes, the admiral of Ptolemy Philadelphus, described the ports and bays of the Mediterranean. The Peripatetic Dicæarchus noted the *Measurements of the Mountains of the Peloponnesus*. Agatharchides of Cnidus (first half of the second century) composed *On Europe and Asia*, a vast geographical encyclopædia in fifty-nine books, written in an agreeable, original style.

Numerous others were *περιηγηταί*, guides or conductors for travellers visiting famous cities. Their science was often of bad alloy, and their literature not much better. Still, one was really celebrated: it was Polemo, who was born toward the close of the third century in a suburb of the New Ilium. He was author of a multitude of writings, not all exclusively descriptive. He may have had some of the merits of a true scholar. Scymnus of Chios also wrote a rather celebrated *Περιήγησις*, in the second century, describing the whole of the world then known.

Mathematical geography had a much more illustrious representative in Eratosthenes of Cyrene, who lived in the third century.<sup>1</sup> A pupil of Callimachus, fond of philosophy, he closed his life as librarian at Alexandria. He was a many-sided man — geometer, geographer, chronographer, philosopher, philologist, and even poet. As geographer and chronographer, he was a scholar of the first order. His *Geography* (*Γεωγραφικά*), in three books, began with a review of previous geographical systems. The little that we know of it shows rare critical acumen. He said that, in Homer, one should not look for facts. He added ingeniously that, before finding the route followed by Odysseus, one must find the cobbler who sewed together the leather bag of Æolus. He described the form of the earth as spherical, and studied latitudes and longitudes, the relative situa-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bernhardt. *Eratosthenica*, Berlin, 1822. The geographical fragments of Eratosthenes are almost all quoted by Strabo in his prolegomena. They are edited separately by Berger, Leipsic, 1880.

tion of countries, and the phenomena reported by explorers. His last work was an account of the political geography of his time. The whole was accompanied by a map. His work was certainly the masterpiece of scientific geography in antiquity. His *Chronography* (Περὶ χρονογραφιῶν) was no less remarkable for critical vigor and good sense. It is he, apparently, who first said that the historic period began with the Olympiads and that the preceding ages were legendary. His personal researches were rewarded by a mass of discoveries of detail, that immediately became classic.

**5. History of Philosophy, Letters, and Fine Arts.** — The history of the productions of the human mind is still another form which at that time took on considerable importance. Aristotle had already set the example by mentioning with each question the works of his predecessors. His disciple, Theophrastus, composed special works on the "opinions" (δόξαι) of the philosophers.<sup>1</sup> After Theophrastus, Aristoxenus of Tarentum wrote *Lives of the Poets*. Heraclides of Pontus touched on the history of philosophy (*On the Pythagoreans*), literary history (*On the Age of Homer and Hesiod, On Archilochus and Homer*), and the history of music, in connection with Sophocles and Euripides. Chameleon, his countryman and contemporary, composed numerous writings on the classic poets and their types of composition. Antigonus of Carystus in Eubœa, a scholar and philosopher, attracted to Pergamon by Attalus I, wrote the *Lives of the Philosophers*, often cited by Diogenes Laertius; also biographies of artists, rich in exact information, of which we have a feeble echo in Pliny the Elder. Sotion of Alexandria (beginning of the second century) is the author of a celebrated work in thirteen books on the *Succession of the Philosophers* (διαδοχὴ τῶν φιλοσόφων), the relationship of the schools and doctrines, a work which was one of the principal sources of Diogenes Laertius, and gave rise to many analogous treatises.

**6. Philology and Grammar.** — Erudite interest was no less active in philology, a domain then brought to light by circumstances. Before the Macedonian hegemony, the Greeks had been artists and creators in literature, rather than theorists and scholars. The diffusion of Hellenism after Alexander, and the foundation of the library of Alexandria, and later that of Pergamon, gave to philological and grammatical study the necessary impetus. Manuscripts needed to be purchased, and the authentic and the apocryphal distinguished; the treasures thus accumulated needed classification, and their riches needed to be made accessible to readers. Explanation of the masterpieces was called for, as the evolution of language and the new en-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Diels, *Doxographi Græci*. Berlin, 1879.

vironment rendered them too remote even for the throng of cultured readers. Hence there were catalogues, scholia, editions, grammatical treatises and philological writings of every sort. Evidently none of this could have artistic value. The works were scientific, not literary. But our knowledge of them is very slight; and we cannot give a detailed account. Yet there were great names that the humanists could not pronounce but with respect.<sup>1</sup>

Zenodotus of Ephesus, a pupil of the poet and philologist Philetas, was preceptor to the children of Ptolemy Soter, and then the first librarian of Alexandria. Though forgotten as a poet, he continued to be famous as a philologist. His edition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* was the first of those Alexandrian διορθώσεις, critical editions founded on the comparative and methodical study of literary sources. Callimachus of Ephesus seems to have been the successor of Zenodotus as librarian; but he is more celebrated as a poet than as a philologist. We shall meet with him, accordingly, in the next chapter. But we must mention here, among many other scholarly works, his immense publication in one hundred and twenty books, *Sketches of Illustrious Writers and their Works* (Πίνακες τῶν ἐν πάσῃ παιδείᾳ διαλαμψάντων καὶ ὧν συνέγραψαν). It was biographical, historical, and critical, and all the works of the library, classified according to types and order of dates, were enumerated and catalogued in it. Besides, it contained a multitude of positive facts of the greatest value. Eratosthenes composed an important work on the Old Comedy. Aristophanes of Byzantium, a pupil of Callimachus, librarian at the age of sixty-two (beginning of the second century), was a grammarian, lexicographer, bibliographer, and editor of texts, and that with a superiority of method and scholarship which puts him in the first rank. In grammar, he formulated the theory of analogy, which tries to explain rationally the variety of grammatical forms. In lexicography, he collected instances of the occurrence of words, of proverbs, and even of the eccentricities of language. In bibliography, he completed the *Sketches* of Callimachus. As an editor, he published Homer, Hesiod, the principal lyric, comic, and tragic poets, Plato, and other writers, with arguments, critical signs of every sort, indications of metre and marks of accent,—all designed to make the old texts clearer and preserve more certainly their proper readings. Aristarchus of Samothrace, born about 215, lived till 143, and was the disciple and successor of Aristophanes. A grammarian also and an upholder of the theory of analogy, he was principally an editor of texts and a commentator. Besides celebrated editions of

<sup>1</sup> The works of these philologists are chiefly known from the notices of them in later scholiasts.



Homer, Hesiod, Alcæus, Pindar, and several tragedies of Æschylus, numberless exegetical commentaries were composed by him. His name became proverbial as that of a critic of the first order. The scholia of later ages show clearly the nature of his criticism on Homer and Pindar. They were those of a prodigiously erudite man, with delicate and definite tastes, and a mind that, within limits, could even be called penetrating. He was more a humanist than a historian, and was educated in a rationalism that, notwithstanding his good sense, made it impossible that he should be always satisfactory in his appreciation of things very ancient. The last of the great critics of the time is Crates of Mallos in Cilicia, a contemporary of Aristarchus, and at times his adversary. He was a Stoic philosopher, whom his very philosophy impelled to the study of grammar. Attalus II invited him to Pergamon. We know much less of him than of the great Alexandrians who were his contemporaries; yet we know that he opposed the theory of analogy, and substituted for it that of anomaly or irregularity, of spontaneous creation in matters of language. The view was a profound one and seems to have dominated all his criticism. He published commentaries on Homer, Hesiod, and other poets.

**7. Technology.** — The theorists of art and science were no more truly literary than the philologists. Here again, consequently, brief notice must suffice.

Let us consider first Aristoxenus of Tarentum, a pupil of Aristotle, whom we have already considered as a biographer, but who occupied himself also with the theory of rhythms and music. As a philosopher, he composed scholarly works on legislation, and various other treatises. But he is known to-day chiefly on account of his *Elements of Harmony*, of which three books are extant, and his *Elements of Rhythm*, of which we have only fragments, though they are highly instructive.<sup>1</sup> He had treated these subjects as a true disciple of Aristotle, founding his theories upon direct analysis of the facts. His style is vigorous and precise. His naturally severe tastes made him a partisan of the ancients and an opponent of innovation.

Mathematics and physics had at this time three celebrated representatives. Euclid, who lived at Alexandria under Ptolemy Soter, was the author of the *Elements of Geometry* (thirteen books) to which civilized humanity has still to go to find the principles of that science. It is probable, however, that he was not so much an inventor as an admirable teacher. Aristarchus of Samos, a pupil of the Peri-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Westphal, *Aristoxenos von Tarent*, Leipsic, 1883. The *Elementa Rhythmica* are translated into French by C. E. Ruelle, Paris, 1870.

patetic Strato of Lampsacus, was the first Greek astronomer to hold the profound view that the earth turns around the sun, not the sun around the earth. Archimides, born at Syracuse about 287, and slain in 212 at the time the city was besieged by the Romans, was one of the greatest scientific minds of antiquity. Geometer, engineer, and physicist, in the modern sense of the term, he excelled in each of these sciences. We have some of his writings, that relate chiefly to geometry. We have only a Latin translation of his *Treatise on Floating Bodies*, in which was enunciated and developed the principle that bears his name. Apollonius of Perga in Pamphylia was celebrated, about the same time, as a geometer and astronomer; while Philo of Byzantium was famous as an engineer, particularly in military engineering.

In the third century, medicine produced two remarkable scholars, Hierophilus of Chalcedon and Erasistratus of Elis, who became heads of medical schools. The disciples of the former were more faithful to the doctrines of Hippocrates; those of the latter were innovators. Others, who were called "empiricists," seem to have been less theoretical and more concerned for traditional prescriptions. Yet all studied anatomy with ardor, sometimes even practising vivisection, not only of animals, but also, it is said, of criminals, who were put at their disposal by the kings of Egypt and Syria.

Let us cite also, as belonging to a closely allied field, the series of studies which then gave rise to so many theoretical or practical works on the natural sciences, *Περὶ θηρίων*, *Θηριακά*, *Λιθακά*, *Γεωργικά*, etc. Most of these have disappeared without leaving any trace of themselves beyond a vague mention in some later work; but the very fact of this vigorous production is enough to characterize the ardently studious, laborious age.

**8. Semi-romantic Literature.**—By an unexpected, though natural, contrast, this age of scholarship is also one of romantic imagination. Not only is imagination often combined with scholarship, which it destroys and compromises through its fondness for the marvellous and unusual—notably in the description of things in the distance; but there it is active in its proper sphere, and follows the precedent inaugurated by the *Cyropædia*.

Hecateus of Abdera (or of Teos), a contemporary of the first Ptolemy, was the author of two works, *On the Hyperboreans*, and *On Egypt*, in which, under cover of history, he gave free course to the expression of philosophical, religious, and moral fancies.<sup>1</sup>

Euhemerus of Messina, his contemporary, exercised a considerable influence by a singular book entitled *The Sacred Inscription* (*Ἱερὰ*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Müller, *Fr. Hist. Græc.* II, pp. 384–396.

ἀναγραφή).<sup>1</sup> He was supposed to have read the inscription on an altar of the city of Panara, the capital of Panchæa. It reported that Uranus, Cronus, and Zeus had been kings of Panchæa, and became gods after death. The author began with this theme to set forth what has since been called Euhemerism, the theory according to which the gods are apotheosized men. The theory had prodigious success, being found in germ in the earlier epochs. But thus presented, it became the religion — or irreligion — of a multitude of élite spirits.

That there was at this time also something like true romance is proved notably by the existence of those *Milesian Tales* in which the officers of the army of Crassus took such delight during the expedition against the Parthians.<sup>2</sup> They were attributed to a certain Aristides of Miletus. But of the romances of this period nothing has been left behind.

**9. Jewish-Greek and Apocryphal Literature.** — In closing this sketch of prose in the first two centuries of the Alexandrian period, we must note a final interesting group, that of the Greek Jews at Alexandria. An important Jewish colony had been established there at the time when the city was founded. They prospered and became very numerous. Though retaining their traditions, they were slowly Hellenized, and many of them eventually spoke only Greek. Hence arose, on the one hand, Greek translations of their sacred books for the use of those who no longer understood Hebrew, and on the other, books written in Greek by Jews who tried to teach their law to the Gentiles. The version of the Bible called the *Septuagint* belongs to the former class of works. We need only mention it; for it belongs to Greek literature neither in substance nor in form. To the second class of Jewish-Greek works belong those of Aristobulus, who lived at Alexandria in the first half of the second century, and wrote in Greek an *Explanation of the Law of Moses*, designed to prove to the pagans the Jewish origin of their philosophy. We may mention also, though without much stress, the considerable part taken by Hellenistic Jews in the fabrication of that multitude of apocryphal works, the pseudo-Orpheus, pseudo-Phocylides, pseudo-Hecataeus, and the *Sibylline Books*, which went on multiplying in this period, all having for their object the task of putting Jewish ideas under the patronage of the great names of pagan literature. The Orient and Greece touched and intermingled at Alexandria more than anywhere else. Pure Greek genius was altered thereby; but the influence of the alloy on the course of history was to be of such importance that it is worth while to take careful note of its origin.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Némethy, *Euhemeri Reliquia*, Buda-Pesth, 1889.    <sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Crassus*, 32.

## CHAPTER XXV

### ALEXANDRIAN POETRY

1. Alexandrianism in Poetry : General View. 2. The Amorous Elegy : Philetas of Cos and his Associates. 3. Asclepias of Samos and the Epigram ; Leonidas of Tarentum. 4. The Realists : Sotades, Rhinthon, etc. The Mime : Herondas. 5. Theocritus and the Idyll. 6. Imitators of Theocritus. 7. Academic Poetry. 8. Callimachus. 9. Aratus. 10. Apollonius of Rhodes. 11. Lycophron. 12. The last Epic, Didactic, and Elegiac Poets. 13. Continuance of the Epigram : Meleager ; the Anthologies.

**1. Alexandrianism in Poetry : General View.**<sup>1</sup>— We have seen, in the preceding chapter, that after Alexander, Greek literature ceased to be national and popular, and became cosmopolitan and polished ; we have seen, also, what transformations resulted in prose literature. The change was no less profound in poetry. The exhaustion of the old types, a different spirit in general, a new public, and different external circumstances, brought about new forms of poetry, new subjects, a new style. Matter and form, all was changed. Even in the city of the fourth century, epic was merely a memory, lyric poetry was extinct, and tragedy, distorted by rhetoric, scarcely lived save in tradition. Comedy alone, as we have seen, maintained a real activity. After the spread of Hellenism through the world, and the founding of new intellectual centres, the earlier types, closely associated with a body of ideas and sentiments which had disappeared, became still more antiquated and remote. They no longer found any response in the hearts of the people. The people had ceased to be a real public. The poets, like the prose-writers, addressed them no more. Every piece of composition was designed for the educated, for the cosmopolitan minority that, at Pergamon and at Alexandria, or even at Cos and Syracuse, had received the polite culture of Hellenism, and took an interest in the art of writing. These were professional scholars in princely courts of Greek origin and in banqueting halls of culture. The intellectual needs of this peculiar public were no longer like those to which Pindar or Sophocles ministered. The circle of men of letters lived a narrow, artificial life, surrounded with libraries,

<sup>1</sup> Consult : on this whole period, besides the work of Susemihl mentioned in the preceding chapter, the classic work of A. Couat, *La Poésie alexandrine*, Paris, 1880.



official and social festivities, and public lecture rooms, amid rivalries and intrigues, far from the agora, far from politics and war, far from those collective emotions which stir the hearts of the people. Under such conditions, poetry became erudite, bookish, refined, and meagre in passion. It gave the first place to love, which, in default of public life, became the most important sentiment; and even this was no higher in quality than the hearts in which it existed. It was generally sensual. Though sometimes passionate, it nearly always fell into a somewhat insipid, conventional gallantry. The excess of literary production, too, constantly cloyed the more natural sentiments. It was impossible to feel true emotion simply; and even when that was expressed, it was tainted with literary vanity, an unbearable display of erudition, an assumed simplicity, which is the height of over-refinement. The art of composition grew feeble; the intellect busied itself with details, sought for tidbits, and no longer cared for, or was able to grasp, entire wholes. The style, on the contrary, became the object of fervent worship. Never was the art of chiselling a sentence better cultivated; never was more effort of learning used in the choice of words. In the greatest Alexandrian writers, the style is a marvel of subtle cleverness and elegance; in the others, it becomes labored and pedantic. Because tradition prescribed the use of certain dialects for certain types, or for the expression of certain ideas, there was a curious drain upon the rich treasure of dialects, sometimes with more diligence than taste, and at the risk of producing a disagreeable patchwork. Versification was addressed chiefly to readers, and changed its character. Lyric rhythms of every sort became rarer; the simple hexameter and the elegiac distich were employed for all purposes, and the art of constructing these metres reached great perfection. The most common forms of composition were the amorous, mythological elegy, the mime, the satiric or the bucolic poem, the epigram, and the official and social hymn in hexameter or elegiac verse. These forms were almost limited to a certain length: the smallness of the frame was in harmony with the nature of the inspiration; and both were an indication of the taste. Even then there were partisans of epic. This form of composition was the subject of a great literary quarrel, though the Alexandrian epic, in general, did not resemble the Homeric in its dimensions any more than in its nature. The number of poets was considerable. Every one could write verse, and many did it with some skill. It is difficult to classify satisfactorily even the more important writers, owing to the diversity of types and to numerous chronological uncertainties. We shall study the appearance of the types in the beginning or middle of the third century as closely as possible in the order of time: then, type by type,

the most interesting writers among those who devoted themselves to it.

**2. The Amorous Elegy: Philetas of Cos and his Associates.**—The first in date of the Alexandrian poets, and one of the founders of the new art, was Philetas, born at Cos about 340, a grammarian and poet, and the teacher of Philadelphus. After a residence of some years at Alexandria, he seems to have finished his career in his native island, surrounded by a group of friends and disciples, most of whom were destined to become celebrated in turn.<sup>1</sup> His fame was great. Besides some erudite works in prose, he composed a collection of light, amorous elegies, probably comprising epigrams for the most part, in which he sang of Bittis; another collection entitled *Telephus*, from the name of his father; and two longer poems, one, in elegiac verse, entitled *Demeter*, and the other, in hexameters, entitled *Hermes*. We have scarcely fifty verses of his works. Some of them evince delicate talent and amiable judgment.

For example, note these on the death of a friend:—

"I mourn not for thee, dearest of my friends: thou hast known the joys of life in large measure, though the gods have given thee, too, thy share of ills."

But it is chiefly by the eulogies of his successors that the importance of his rôle is attested. Theocritus recognized him as a master,<sup>2</sup> and the Roman Propertius invoked him as one of the demigods of elegiac poetry.<sup>3</sup> In fact, he appears to have opened several new paths in which, after his death, Alexandrian poetry was to walk. His *Hermes* and his *Demeter* were doubtless familiar, romantic epics, fore-running the *Hecale* of Callimachus. His epigrams broke the path for Asclepias of Samos. His elegies, by a mixture of love confessions with mythology, transformed the traditional elegy, and adapted it to the taste of the day.

The amorous, mythological elegy, thus essentially defined at the beginning, was marvellously suited to the spirit of the times, and immediately adopted by numerous poets. The principal ones were Hermesianax of Colophon, Phanocles, and Alexander of Ætolia. Hermesianax, a pupil of Philetas, composed an epic poem entitled *Περσικά*, of which we know almost nothing; and three books of elegies entitled *Leontium*, from the name of his mistress. A long fragment of the third book reveals fairly well his erudite, frivolous manner. The theme of the passage is that all poets are amorous. It is demonstrated with a pedantic, interminable enumeration of the most

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in Jacobs. *Anthology*. I, p. 121 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Theocr. VII, 40.

<sup>3</sup> Propertius, IV, 1; Callimachi manes et Coi sacra Philetæ.

celebrated amours attributed to poets, though without any criticism, and in a language rather labored than elegant. Phanocles composed, about the same time, an elegiac poem entitled *Amours, or the Beautiful Youths* (Ἔρωτες ἡ καλοί). He also recounted antique legends. A fragment of twenty-eight verses on the death of Orpheus shows the same fondness for superficial erudition, joined with a melancholy grace. Alexander of Ætolia was probably a disciple of Philetas. As a grammarian and poet, he was attached to the library at Alexandria, where he gathered together and classified the tragic poets. He composed some tragedies and various little known poems, also two collections of elegies entitled *Apollo* and *The Muses*. A fragment of the *Apollo* is a prophecy in which the god foretells the tragic amours of Antheus with the wife of Phobius. It is the work of a skilful, interesting versifier rather than of an inspired poet.

On the whole, all these poets resemble each other in being ingenious and rather frivolous versifiers, in whom love is only a pretext for the display of mythological lore. It does not appear that the Alexandrian elegy produced any really superior poet, one who could bring out, in this rather unnatural type, the elements of beauty which, perhaps, were contained in it, but could be disclosed only by the hand of genius.<sup>1</sup>

**3. Asclepias of Samos and the Epigram ; Leonidas of Tarentum.** — By the side of Philetas and above the poets just named ranks Asclepias of Samos, their contemporary.<sup>2</sup> He wrote works of different sorts, notably lyric poems, which were probably love songs imitated from the poets of Lesbos. The Asclepiad derives its name from him. He did not invent it, however, for it is found already among the Lesbians. But he no doubt renewed and reinvigorated it. His lyric poems are lost ; and it is chiefly as the author of epigrams that he was celebrated during his lifetime and that we can still appreciate him. His fame was not undeserved. The eighteen epigrams preserved under his name in the *Palatine Anthology*, of which only two or three are doubtful, reveal him to us sufficiently. Most of them are charming confidences, in which the poet tells us of his amorous suffering and the graces of his loved one, in the manner of those poets who are read and re-read. Mythology has little place. The sketches of literary personages have grace and novelty. What chiefly constitutes their original merit is the ingeniousness of their turn, the vivid elegance of their imagery, the delicacy of their style, and the scrupulous neatness of their rhythm and versification. The ancient epigrammatists, and even Simonides, had more artlessness and easy grace

<sup>1</sup> Cf. F. Plessis, *Études sur Propertius*, Paris, 1884, p. 265 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Fragments in Jacobs, *Anthology*, I. p. 144 ff.

at times, yet with more grandeur. Asclepias is a subtle writer. His art, though of exquisite elegance, is rather too detailed, yet undoubtedly furnished useful models to Theocritus. Here is an epigram in imitation of Alcæus and Theognis, but with traces of really personal impressions; a translation, however, cannot give the elegance of its turn and its expression: —

“Drink, Asclepias! Why these tears? What misfortune has befallen thee? Thou art not the only one whom harsh Cypris has made her prey, whom the arrows of cruel Eros have smitten. Why bury thyself alive in the dust? Let us drink the pure wine of Bacchus: the morning is beginning to break. If the lamp has gone out, wouldst thou wait until it burns again? Let us drink gayly. A few days yet, poor man, and we shall have the long night for rest.”<sup>1</sup>

Simmias, Posidippus, and Hedylus, of whom, likewise, the *Anthology* has preserved a few fragments, are contemporary with Asclepias, or come immediately after him; but they are mere poets with an amiable disposition. A few women also wrote epigrams. One from the Peloponnesus, Anyte of Tegea, has left a few charming poems, chiefly epigrams.<sup>2</sup> Leonidas of Tarentum is, however, more than simply an agreeable poet.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary of Theocritus, perhaps slightly younger, he led a wandering life in poverty. He consoled himself for his miseries by writing epigrams and thinking of his future renown. His confidence was not misplaced; the Muses, in fact, as he said, loved him. We have under his name about a hundred epigrams belonging to all the types then cultivated: epitaphs, inscriptions for offerings, inscriptions for statues, sketches of poets and artists, and bits of philosophical or moral reflection. Many were composed for fishers or spinsters, for humble persons whom the poor poet visited, for those who offered *ex-votos* to some god, or those who had just died. Hence he has a pleasing realism, precise technical terms, professional words, and the whole relieved by chaste emotion. He extols with charm the sweetness of an existence amid poverty and labor, the grace of spring, the freshness of a fountain, and even, once when he took his inspiration from Simonides, the pettiness of man's life as a whole, a fleeting moment of time between two infinities: —

“An immense epoch passed, O man, before thou camest to the light, and an immense one shall pass again when thou hast gone to Hades. What is the importance of thy life? A point of time, or even less. And that is hard; for, far from being sweet, it is more irksome and odious than death. Abandon, then, thy stormy life.

<sup>1</sup> Jacobs, *Anthology*, I. p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153 ff.



and flee toward the port of Hades, as I — I, Phido, the son of Critus — have done.”<sup>1</sup>

**4. The Realists: Sotades, Rhinthon, etc. The Mime: Herondas.** — The subtlety of fine spirits often has for its counterpart in literature a strong fondness for realism and even for coarseness. This was made manifest in the Alexandrian period.

We have already spoken of the *Silloi* of Timon and the poems of Menippus, which, notwithstanding their more or less philosophical character, are products of just such a taste.

The gross and obscene satire of Sotades is another example. Sotades, born at Maronea in Crete, was contemporary with the first Ptolemies. He composed, for reading only, a few satiric songs in a metre afterward called Sotadean. It is made up of ionic feet. He seems to have been talented, but the little that remains of his works is too coarse for translation. One of his songs, attacking Philadelphus, was the cause of his death. The king of Egypt had him seized by one of his admirals and thrown into the sea, sewed up in a sack.

At the same time, Rhinthon of Tarentum, the son of a potter, introduced into literature the droll satire popular among his countrymen of Magna Græcia. Athenæus, in an interesting passage,<sup>2</sup> enumerates all the types of farce in which the imagination of these lively, gay people sought expression. Rhinthon drew thence his inspiration. In his “hilaro-tragedies” entitled *Heracles*, *Amphitryo*, *Iphigenia*, etc., the heroes of classic tragedy became personages of operetta. He had some success, but his works have almost wholly perished.

The mime, which, since the fifth century, had been so popular at Syracuse, owing to Sophron and Xenarchus, now took on new life under the influence of this realistic spirit. Perhaps to this type of mime must be assigned an interesting fragment recently found on an Egyptian papyrus which contains the lament of a woman forsaken by her lover.<sup>3</sup> It is a monologue composed in the common dialect, probably in rhythmic prose, and dramatic only in assuming a change of place. The lady slowly approached her lover’s door, and perhaps at last made him hear her lament. The passage is interesting. The seven mimes of Herondas, also recently discovered, are a much more important literary monument.<sup>4</sup> Herondas (or Herodas),

<sup>1</sup> *Anthol. Pal.* VII, 472; Jacobs, I, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> Athenæus, XIV, 620 D ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. H. Weil, *Revue des Études grecques*, 1896, p. 169.

<sup>4</sup> Editio Princeps by Kenyon, London, 1891; editions by Crusius, Teubner, 1892; by Bücheler, Bonn, 1892, with Latin translation. French translation by Delageyda, Hachette, 1893; and by Ristelhüner, Delagrave, 1893. English translation by J. A. Symonds in his *Studies of the Greek Poets*.

born possibly at Syracuse, is contemporary with the first Ptolemies. He wrote choliambic verse in the Ionic dialect. The choliambic verse or "halting" iambic, also called scazon, had fallen into disuse after Hipponax of Ephesus. Herondas chose it as an erudite artist; there was excellent concord between the nature of the metre and the realism of his inspiration. The choice of the dialect resulted naturally from the Ionic origin of the metre. From Herondas we know completely the nature of a Greek mime. It was a short dramatic scene designed for reading, in which two or three persons at most chat familiarly. The personages of Herondas are humble burghers, a slave-merchant, a schoolmaster, a fashionable shoemaker, etc. The poet shows them to us in the pursuit of their ordinary occupations. It is an hour of their life that he puts before us, with its commonplace concerns, its amusements, its petty passions, its familiar gossip. His realism chose for its field of observation the whole life of the middle classes. He does not put into his pictures either satiric bitterness or amiability; he is sober, impersonal, and true. He neither seeks nor avoids coarseness; sometimes he meets it on the way and hastily notes it, yet without emphasis. The humanity he depicts is, in its essential elements, that of all times; but it is principally characterized, in a manner very peculiar and amusing, by the form which these elements take at a certain date and under a certain environment, the Greek Alexandrian environment of the third century. In brief, he is a very agreeable writer, not much of a poet, though he wrote in verse, and a true, keen observer.

5. Theocritus and the Idyll.—Pure poetry is associated with realism in the works of Theocritus, the creator and master of the idyll, the greatest poet of this period, and the only one who, in certain respects, is still classic.<sup>1</sup>

He was born probably at Syracuse in the last years of the fourth century. Part of his youth was passed at Cos, where he knew Philetas and his circle, Asclepias of Samos, Aratus, and the physician Nicias of Miletus. He certainly resided also in Magna Græcia.

<sup>1</sup> BIBLIOGRAPHY: Editions by Reiske, Vienna, 1765; Heindorf, *Bucolici Græci*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1810; Ameis, in the *Bucolici Græci* of the Didot Collection, Paris, 1846; Fritzsche-Hiller, 3d ed., Leipsic, 1881, with a scholarly commentary; Ahrens, Teubner, 1855, sometimes overbold and arbitrary; L. Renier, Paris, Hachette, 1894, with a translation into French; Snow, Oxford, 1885; Wordsworth, Cambridge, 1877; Meineke, 3d ed., Berlin, 1856; Ziegler, Tübingen, 1879.

French translation by Leconte de Lisle, Paris, 1869 (with Hesiod); and by J. Girard, Paris, 1888. English translation by A. Lang, London, 1889 (with Bion and Moschus); and in verse by C. S. Calverley, Cambridge, 1869.

Articles by Sainte-Beuve, *Portraits littéraires*, vol. III; and by J. Girard, *Études sur la poésie grecque*, Paris, 1884. Consult particularly, in addition to the chapter by Couat, the important work of E. Legrand, *Étude sur Théocrite*, Paris, 1898; Gebauer, *De Theocriti Carminibus*, Leipsic, Mendelssohn, 1861.

A little before 270 he addressed to Hiero of Syracuse a sort of epistle (*Idyll* XVI) asking his protection. Not having succeeded in persuading Hiero, he turned to Philadelphus, who probably received him with greater favor; for some of his poems appear to have been composed at Alexandria. Neither the date of his birth nor that of his death are known.

We have under his name, besides some epigrams, thirty poems called *Idylls* (εἰδύλλια). The word εἰδύλλιον, which does not go back to Theocritus himself, signifies simply a short poem.<sup>1</sup> As "bucolic" poems predominate in the collection, the term "idyll" has taken on, among modern peoples, the sense of pastoral poem;<sup>2</sup> but this meaning is not applicable to all his compositions. Of the thirty idylls attributed to him, five are apocryphal (XIX, XX, XXI, XXIII, and XXVII). The other twenty-five, notwithstanding their common title, differ much from one another. They include love songs, mimes in the style of Herondas, rustic poems more or less resembling the mime or the song, epic lays, hymns, and one epistle. They resemble each other in brevity and in the predominance of hexameter. The double character is worthy of attention; for the brevity of the little poems is perfectly adapted to the nature of their inspiration, their exquisite art, elegant in its finish, carefully and skilfully polished, in which even boldness and aptitude accompany fine precision. The general employment of hexameter well signifies that the poems are all composed for readers, and that difference of metres would not be in taste, as there would be no corresponding difference in the mode of execution. All the poems reflect his genius in their substance — a genius thoroughly personal and original.

More than any one else among many men of letters who were his contemporaries, he possessed two distinguishing qualities: a strong, sympathetic sensibility, and the dramatic gift of creating vivid personages. Polished culture has not stifled his sensibility, as in the case of so many others; the natural man survived in the man of letters. He sees not merely the external world — and no one has a more clear, plastic, many-colored view than he; but he enjoys it with all his powers of sense. The newly fashioned bowl is still a product of clay for him, the fleece of Lycidas still retains its odor, the perfumes of autumn float about the feast of the Thalyssia. The fresh sweetness of shade and water, the softness of a bed thick with dried herbs, are vividly felt and described. He hears the murmur

<sup>1</sup> It is the diminutive of εἶδος, which, in Alexandrian parlance, meant a "poem." Ordinarily, the word εἰδύλλιον is translated, though very inaccurately, by "picturette."

<sup>2</sup> The word "eclogue," which properly signifies only a "select" extract, has had the same alteration of meaning and for the same reason.

of the brook and the chirping of the crickets. He is capable of true passion and strong love. In him one "feels the man," as Martial said, *hominem pagina nostra sapit*. He has also a dramatic gift; this person of lively sensibilities knows how to go beyond himself. The beings he imagines and represents are not for him vain phantoms: they live their own life, in an environment with which they are in harmony; and he pictures before us the whole situation with strokes that make it realistic.

Among the idylls, some have emotion and lyric sensibility almost exclusively, or at least in great predominance. Such are the love songs proper (XII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX), a few songs which are yet scarcely more than chants of love in the mouths of fictitious personages (the magician, II; the lover of Amaryllis, III; the Cyclops, XI), and finally the Epithalamium of Helen (XVIII). The magician is a young girl who seeks in magic a means of bringing back her lover. A look sufficed to throw her into a delirium; then she was consumed and withered away. In a monologue broken with refrains, she pursues, with her maid-servant, her magic incantations; then, alone in the light of the moon, she recounts the rise of her love and her fierce torments. The whole poem burns with passion. Theocritus, while imitating Sappho, in turn inspired the Medea of Apollonius and the Dido of Vergil:—

"Lo! how quiet are the sea and the winds. But in my breast, my sorrow is not quiet. For I am all aflame with yearning for that man, who has made me, poor woman, not his wife, but a base, lost creature."<sup>1</sup>

Polyphemus also, the Cyclops, is dying of love. Seated beside the sea on a rock, his heart longs for Galatea, who eludes him; and he breathes his longing in a series of passionate, desolate couplets. His love, like that of the magician, is simple and strong. It is none of those diminutive sentiments that amuses itself giving presents of "apples, roses, locks of hair";<sup>2</sup> it is "madness," a fever, which must be assuaged by appropriate remedies, and chiefly by the most efficacious of all, the plaint of sorrow.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to representing these burning passions, he shows an objective dramatic gift in all its impersonal clearness. The idyll of the shepherds (*Battus and Corydon*, IV), and that of *Thyonnichous, or the Love of Cymisca* (XIV), are mimes as vivid and real as those of Herondas, with the merit of grace besides. Love, it is true, is not absent, it is his proper element; but here it does not have first place. The idyll of the shepherds is exquisite, with its capricious,

<sup>1</sup> II, 38-41.

<sup>2</sup> XI, 10-11.

<sup>3</sup> XI, 1-4.



light gossip, resting now on this, now on that, object: the departure of Milo, the good cowherd, who regrets his lost heifers; the lamentable aspect of the herd without its master; the musical avocations of the two herdsmen; the sketch of Amaryllis; the petty incidents of pastoral life—a goat running away, a goat's foot wounded by a thorn; and, at the last, a few pungent words about the future. The idyll of Thyonichus has for its scene a small wine-shop in the city, where Æschines relates to his friend his amorous mortifications and is advised to become a soldier; in the service of Ptolemy, he will forget the unfaithfulness. The two persons are sketched with a sure and clever stroke.

The prettiest idylls are those in which he has found the secret of fusing into a harmonious whole the lyric and dramatic qualities that existed side by side in his nature. The scene, as in the preceding poems, is now in the city, and now in the fields, and the setting may be dramatic, or narrative, or both. In the rustic idylls of the group, the lyric centre is formed by a "bucoliasm," or musical and poetic strife between two shepherds. Such alternating lyric chants were really used by the shepherds of Sicily and Magna Græcia. Traces of the custom are still found. They whiled away their leisure hours, playing on the reed, repeating popular songs, and improvising; and they loved to challenge each other in their sport. Theocritus had seen such poetic tourneys in the country where part of his life was passed. Like the great poets of the classic period, who drew from popular sources the elements of their inspiration, he raised the pastoral poem to the dignity of a literary type. About this "bucoliasm" the mime was developed and prolonged in conversations. Such is also the structure of the *Syracusan Women* (XV), of which the scene is at Alexandria. In this the accounts given by two mothers during their promenade through the city are grouped about a lyric chant in honor of Adonis. On this flexible yet strong frame, the author weaves an admirable poetry, and a whole essay on the conception of life. The rustic idylls, in particular, are the latest and most celebrated part of his work, and that by which he has exercised the greatest influence over posterity.

The main feature is a pretty dream of rustic life. Such a dream is frequently found in highly civilized epochs. He gave a great poet's sketch of it, with a picturesque element of realism and lucid grace that adds a wholly original accent to his conception of nature and his portrayal of the men that live surrounded by it.

Nature is not for him the stern stepmother described by Hesiod. She no longer presents the great melancholy or tragic aspects in which, sometimes, even the genius of Vergil took delight. Theocritus

scarcely beholds it except in the uniformly fine weather of spring, in the mountain where the herds are pasturing, in the harvested plain, in the grove made balmy by all the fruits of the season, beneath the brilliant sun of Sicily, with the blue line of the water on the horizon. Never has a juster, stronger love for the riches of autumn found expression than in the picture closing the *Thalysia*:<sup>1</sup>—

“Lycidas, with a gracious smile, gave me, in the name of the Muses, his crook as a pledge of friendship. Then he turned to the left and followed the road toward Pyxæ. Eucritus and I, with the handsome Amyntas, reached the home of Phrasidamus, where we lay down on beds thick with odorous rushes and new-cut vine-twigs. Numerous poplars and elms formed a canopy above our heads; and near us, a sacred streamlet flowed, murmuring, from the cave of the nymphs. In the leafy branches, cicadas, browned by the sun, sang till they were weary; the green frog piped in the distance, beneath clusters of acanthus. Larks and goldfinches were trilling away; the turtle-dove cooed; and tawny bees hummed round the fountains. From every side came the rich odor of a summer that was passing into autumn. At our feet, and beside us, rolled pears and apples; while branches loaded with plums bent to the ground. The pitch of four summers ago was being removed from the mouth of the amphora.

“O Nymphs of Castalia, who dwell on the summit of Parnassus, did Chiron of old offer Heracles such a bowl in the rocky cavern of Pholos? Did such a nectar intoxicate the shepherd of Anapos, mighty Polyphemus, who hurled mountains at the ships? such a nectar make him go reeling through the sheepfolds, O Nymphs, as this which ye give us at the altar of Demeter, protectress of the harvest? O that I still might fan the chaff from my grain, while she, laughing, has her hands full of sheaves and poppies!”

In this beautiful and element atmosphere, Theocritus depicts rather shepherds than harvesters or peasants. Thus the shepherd has become the traditional personage for eclogue rather than the laborer. For the shepherd's life is less strenuously toilsome in appearance, more dreamlike, participating more in the grand aspects of nature, passed more among the flocks, beings of instinct that are the very opposite of civilization, and always looked upon by Theocritus with a friendly eye. What he loved above all, in the character of the shepherds, was their artlessness, the simplicity of their ideas and sentiments, everything that kept them aloof from the savants of Cos and Alexandria. They are not shepherds beribboned and perfumed; but are dressed in ill-prepared hides, and old clothes held in place by plaits of rushes.<sup>2</sup> They have flat noses and bushy hair,<sup>3</sup> and the odor of their sheep and goats.<sup>4</sup> They speak in proverbs and are superstitious. If they sing of love, it is with a savor of artlessness;

<sup>1</sup> VII, 128-157.    <sup>2</sup> VII, 15-18.    <sup>3</sup> III, 8; XIV, 3.    <sup>4</sup> V, 50; VII, 16.

and the skill of the great poet consists chiefly in being simple in the representation:—

“Muses of Pieria, sing with me of a delicate maiden; for all that ye touch, O goddesses, ye make beautiful.

“Gracious Bombycea, all think thee a Syrian woman, spare and brown with the sun: I, I alone, I call thee blond as honey.

“The violet, too, is dark, and the hyacinth is wrinkled; yet for crowns, these flowers are gathered first.

“The goat runs to nip the clover, the wolf pursues the sheep, the crane follows the plough; but I, I am eager with love of thee.

“‘Would I were rich as Cræsus,’ men say; but even our statues, though made of gold, are adorned for Aphrodite.

“Thou with thy flutes and a rose or an apple; I with a suit of new clothes and new sandals of Amyclæ.

“Gracious Bombycea, thy feet are knuckle-bones; thy voice, a nightshade; thy mien—I cannot say.”<sup>1</sup>

No doubt there is much fervor in this ingenuousness, yet not too much. The writer is kept from exaggeration by delicate taste and a true sentiment for the things of nature. But at times, in conformity with Greek traditions, the poetic transfiguration of reality is given boldly, in pretty poetic myths. The handsome youth Daphnis, loved by the nymph Nais, dying in the flower of his age, and mourned by all the rustic divinities, is the subject of a threnody in which the genius of the great poet allows itself free play.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere Daphnis becomes in turn a personage of rustic mimes. It is no longer a real, contemporary shepherd, but a legendary, ideal one whom Theocritus puts before us. The same is true of the Cyclops Polyphemus. Thus idealism and pure poetry, in their traditional form of myth, enter unaltered into the rustic mime.

By the side of these frankly rustic idylls, the *Syracusan Women* forms, as it were, a class by itself. It is a no less delightful work than the preceding. The two mothers, like the shepherds of Sicily, are true, simple, ingenuous. They have the tattling manners and quick repartee of the city; but they abound in proverbs. They are amazed at all they see at the festival in Alexandria: they are afraid of the large bay horse; they complain about their husbands, and are withal honest creatures. They do not sing, but are going to hear a song; and the graceful lament in honor of Adonis, which crowns the mime, sheds a perfume of poetry over the amusing and gay picture of a nook in the great city and completes its beauty.

The poet's other works are less characteristic and less complete. Some of them are still beautiful, but of a different character. Five idylls are stories of heroic adventure more or less in imitation of

<sup>1</sup> X. 24-37.

<sup>2</sup> *Idyll I.*

epic. The prettiest are the story of the *Death of Hylas* (XIII), the young friend of Heracles abducted from the water by the nymphs at the moment when he is plunging a vessel into the basin of the spring — a very graceful epic elegy; then *Hercules Slaying the Lion* (XXV), with a fine description of the return of the herds of Augeas, numberless as the clouds driven by the wind, a short description of the struggle with the bull, of an intense sculptural tendency, and a longer story of the struggle with the lion, in which the same merits are heightened by a vivid portrayal of the terror that the monster inspires; finally, the twenty-fourth Idyll, the *Child Heracles* (Ἡρακλίσκος), on the subject of the hero's first exploit, his struggle with the two serpents sent against him by Hera. It is a charming miniature epic, which, though not having the religious grandeur of the story of Pindar, is graceful or picturesque in every detail: the sleep of the children, the arrival of the two monsters, the terror of Iphicles and the valor of Heracles, the hasty struggle, the distracted awakening of Alcmene, and the closing scene. The *Hymn to Ptolemy* (XVII) is only an official poem of cold elegance. The *Hymn to Hiero* (XVI), a half-familiar epistle, is pleasing. Still an epistle and thoroughly exquisite is the *Distaff* (XXVII), written in Aselepiads; Theocritus sends his friend, Nicias of Miletus, a distaff of ivory for the pretty Theugnis, his friend's wife. In a few delightful verses he gives the eulogy of Theugnis and of Nicias.

The poet's versification and style show no less novelty than his inspiration. In every respect he is a superior artist.

We have seen that the hexameter is predominant in his works, as well in rustic dialogue or even the songs of shepherds as in the hymns and short epics. But in adapting itself to such diverse uses, the hexameter changed its nature. Nothing is more flexible or varied than the hexameter of Theocritus. According to circumstances, it is flowing and easy in narratives or descriptions; sharp and clear in lyric song; light, quick, broken, when necessary in familiar dialogue. It develops into periods and strophes of greater or less length; is repeated in refrains, or divided into short members, at the option of the interlocutors. There are verses of Homeric amplitude, and others of exceedingly graceful vivacity. The latter quality is secured chiefly by the diæresis. That called "bucolic," which breaks the rhythm at the end of the fourth foot, is particularly characteristic. He did not invent it, but the frequent use he made of it was original. His verse-endings are often unexpected, and please the ear and the intelligence. Hexameter, thus employed, became a really new verse, the creation of a superior artist, marvelously well adapted to its purpose.



The style is no less clever or novel.

The dialect of the idylls is thoroughly literary, harmoniously chosen, and composed to suit the nature of the poems. Two epic idylls are in Ionic; several songs imitated from the poets of Lesbos are in Æolic; the predominant dialect is a more or less artificial Doric, in imitation of the ordinary heroes of Theocritus, who are shepherds of Sicily, or humble people of Syracuse; and in accordance with the precedents of the mime after Sophron, it is Syracusan. Whatever the importance of the dialect for a Greek poet, the choice of words and the structure of sentences evidently are more important still.

The words in these poems have a rare flavor. Even in epic narratives, like the *Child Heracles*, the plastic sense qualities of the words, the highly colored precision which puts things before our eyes, are continually manifest. In the rustic idylls this picturesque character is still more remarkable. His realism does not hesitate to give specific names; he thus designates plants, trees, animals; he knows the fruits whose perfumes are fused in the fragrance of summer, and the trees that bend above the fountain of Bourina. Nothing is vague. He seeks no stilted nobility or false elegance. He imitates the whistle of shepherds calling their herds (σίττα), and the mocking cry of a young girl as she runs away (ποππιλιάζει). All this is of extraordinary precision and truth. And with it goes the plain, ample word which, with a single effort, calls up the grandeur of mountain or sea, the heat of summer, or the opulence of autumn. The whole is sober, full, and strong; nothing is useless, nothing superfluous, nothing inexpressive or petty. Polyphemus says to Galatea:—

“O fair Galatea, why refuse him who loves thee? Thou art fairer than snow-white cheese, more dainty than a lamb, more active than a heifer, more acrid than an unripe grape.”<sup>1</sup>

Around the rim of the bowl which the goatherd of the first Idyll offers to Thyrsis is a shoot of ivy:—

“A shoot of ivy, sprinkled with buds of helichryse; and delicately plaited round it, another shining with saffron-berries.”<sup>2</sup>

His sentences are as flexible as the ivy, and as active and elastic as Galatea. In dialogue, they are astonishingly free and easy. In descriptions, all are short and serious, producing complete images with few words. Menalchus says to Daphnis:—

“The treasures of Pelops and all his gold do not excite my envy. I have no wish to outrun the winds. On this rock will I sing.

<sup>1</sup> XI, 20-24.

<sup>2</sup> I, 30-31.

Clasping thee in mine arms, I shall keep watch of our mingled herds, and look out over the sea of Sicily.”<sup>1</sup>

In the lyric parts above all, the brisk, lively sentences are sustained by a breathless rhythm, so to speak, which reveals a poet born to voice affection. In the regular, hurried movement of small groups of words, put side by side instead of being joined, one feels the throb of passion, almost the heart-beats. Perhaps it is in this fundamental rhythm that the most truly personal traits of the author appear. In the *Thalysicæ*, an excellent poem, in which every tone and form of Theocritean idyll can be met, one easily sees that from end to end, beneath the superficial differences, there vibrates constantly the same trembling imagination, the same strong, lyric spirit.

In these original, sincere, vigorous qualities, Theocritus surpassed all his contemporaries. He had, in addition, the rare fortune of creating a lasting type. He introduced the songs of humble peasants into literature proper. Vergil and André Chénier are disciples of his. Since the Alexandrian period he has had imitators, some of whom were pleasing or even exquisite in talent.

**6. Imitators of Theocritus.**—Among the foremost of such disciples we must place the unknown author of the idyll entitled *Oaristys* (familiar chat; from *ὄαρ*, wife). Although the poem is found in the collection of Theocritus, it is certainly not his; for a verse of the third Idyll is cited literally; and besides, Theocritus never made his personages speak in stichomythy—dialogue in which each speaker in turn utters only a single verse, as in the *Oaristys*. The poem is, however, charming. The two personages, shepherd and shepherdess, are picturesque, clever, and truly drawn. Their sentiments and attitudes in the various phases of the conversation are indicated with as delicate and sure a stroke as in the *Syracusan Women*. It is a real mine. André Chénier translated it; his translation turns well the grace of the original, yet does not preserve all its biting precision and ingenuity.

Bion and Moschus, whose names are often associated with that of Theocritus, are pleasing poets, though secondary.<sup>2</sup> Bion of Smyrna seems to have lived about the same time as Theocritus. We have seventy extracts, some fragmentary, from his works. The longest is a *Threnody to Adonis*, evidently inspired by the picture terminating the *Syracusan Women*, and imitated also from the *First Idyll*. Bion has a true poet's qualities of emotion and harmony.

<sup>1</sup> VIII, 53-56.

<sup>2</sup> Their works follow those of Theocritus in Heindorf's edition of the *Bucolici Græci* and the Didot *Bucolici Græci*; also in the edition of Ahrens, etc.

Fragments VI and XV depict shepherds engaged in a dialogue. The other passages are not really bucolic and reveal in him a talented poet of love who puts into the painting of affection less of passion than of literary gentility. Moschus, born at Syracuse, was a pupil of Aristarchus, and so lived at the close of the second century. We have under his name, among other works, a *Threnody to Bion*, which patterns after the earlier threnodies to Daphnis and Adonis, but has more of intellect than of emotion. The author of the poem presents himself as a bucolic poet. The other works attributed to him, however, have nothing in common with the rustic idylls of Theocritus. The principal ones are two poems or fragments, entitled *Europa* and *Megara*, which recall the epic idylls of Theocritus. The *Europa* relates with amiable simplicity, in the Ionic dialect, the abduction of a young girl by Zeus, who assumed the form of a bull. The *Megara* is a wordy conversation, though at times rather affecting, between Megara, wife of Heracles, and Alcmene. Megara laments the follies of Heracles, and Alcmene nobly seconds her lament.

**7. Academic Poetry.** — The sincere emotion which constitutes the beauty of the idylls of Theocritus is the element chiefly missed in a group of contemporary poets, also celebrated and clever, but well characterized in a word by being called “academic.” They are more scholarly than inspired, more descriptive than passionate — rather versifiers, in short, than poets. Such are the many-sided Callimachus, the didactic poet Aratus, the epic poet Apollonius, — who is, however, more original than the others, — and the tragic poet Lycophron.

**8. Callimachus.** — This poet, the son of Battus, was born at Cyrene toward the close of the fourth century.<sup>1</sup> His family, he tells us, was descended from the ancient kings of Cyrene. As a grammarian and poet, he had a reputation at the court of Philadelphus, who, after the death of Zenodotus, gave him the direction of the Alexandrian library. His life was divided between the works of erudition already mentioned and poetry. His fame was equally great in both domains. He was, as it were, the perfect type of Alexandrianism. Yet in his last years he was drawn into a coarse literary quarrel, which became a violent struggle for victory. His disciple Apollonius wished to revive the heroic epic. Callimachus, with rather good taste, judged that the age of heroic epic was past. The dispute, though purely literary at first, ended in gross insults, which throw a weird light on

<sup>1</sup> Editions by Ernesti, Leyden, 1761; Schneider, 2 vols., Leipsic, 1870–1873; Meineke, Berlin, 1861; Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, Berlin, 1882. On the recently discovered fragments of the *Hecale*, cf. Th. Reinach, *Revue des Études grecques*, 1893, pp. 258–266.

the violence of men's self-esteem in this society of culture. Apollo-nius was obliged to exile himself from Alexandria.

The poetic works of Callimachus were numerous and varied. They included tragedies, comedies, satiric dramas, heroic hymns, strictly lyric poems, choliambics, elegiac poems in great number, epigrams, and even a familiar epic entitled *Hecale*. Six hymns, one in elegiac verse, have been transmitted to us, with sixty-three epigrams, and a few fragments of the *Hecale*. The chief elegiac poem was a work in four books, *Aïtra*, the *Causes*, or, if one prefers, the *Origins*, an erudite poetic corpus, or collection of old Greek legends pertaining to the origin of certain cities, families, or customs. This truly Alexandrian mixture of erudition and poetry won a great reputation; but the fragments of the text now extant are not sufficiently numerous to be made the object of literary study. The author's poetic talent is nowhere better manifested than in the *Hymns*, the *Epigrams*, the fragments of the *Hecale*, and perhaps in the Latin translation by Catullus of the little poem on *Berenice's Hair*.

Such talent, though admired by the Greeks of Alexandria, and by most literary men at Rome, seems cold to us. The art is polished and clever, but really lacks sincerity. The poet does not feel true emotion nor ingenuous sentiment; he has no interest in the things of which he speaks, save for their rarity, their novelty, or—what amounts to the same thing—their antiquity. Pure cleverness, pure erudition, is his aim. His style is strained to the utmost, composed, in large measure, of old forgotten words. All his adroitness as a versifier cannot conceal the prosaic basis on which the labored edifice of his inspiration rests.

These defects are most evident in the *Hymns*. Callimachus solemnly chants Zeus, Delos, Artemis, Demeter, the Baths of Pallas, and Apollo, for official festivals. He should have used at least a little poetic piety, a little of that artistic emotion which, if sincere, can be put in the place of faith. But he had none of it. He is at great pains to simulate, by ingeniously combined processes of style, the emotion, the artlessness, the religious fervor that he does not have. Yet he produces no illusion. Affectation, pedantry, political flattery, erudite curiosity, are his real inspiration; and the fact is so patent that we cannot for an instant be duped by his polished, but false, art. *Berenice's Hair* is a mere play of wit. The Queen, at the moment when her husband, the King, was to set out on an expedition, had consecrated a lock of hair to Aphrodite to assure his happy return. The lock disappeared from the temple. The astronomer Conon, a knightly courtier, declared that it had been transformed into a constellation, which he had just discovered in the heavens.



Callimachus represents the lock of hair as telling of its metamorphosis. It is a rather pleasing jest; but it reminds one too strongly of the petty poets of France in the eighteenth century. In the writing of epigrams, Callimachus was much more successful. He really had talent: he was one of the first Greek writers of epigram to combine with real Alexandrian elegance, dash in the modern sense of the term. The *Hecale* was one of his last works. He wrote it in response to Apollonius, who accused him of decrying epic poetry because of lacking power to write epic. He wished to show what contemporary epic — a truly original epic — must be like. The very rare fragments of this poem cause one to regret the loss of the rest. “*Hecale*” is the name of an old lady in Attica, who had given hospitality to Theseus on the eve of his struggle with the Marathonian Bull. The fragments show that their author was amusing himself by representing, with picturesque realism, familiar details in the life of his heroine. A neighbor, all icy with the cold of the morning, comes to awake her, and says: —

“Come, the hands of robbers are no longer astir; see how the lamps of morning shine; the water-carrier is singing his refrain; the people in the house next down the road are awakened by the axle, creaking beneath the chariot; and the blacksmiths are hammering away, with a noise that almost makes them deaf.”<sup>1</sup>

It is pretty and ingenious; but nothing shows better than these graceful details how far Callimachus is from Homer and Pindar, and why his *Hymns* are so unbearable.

**9. Aratus.** — The logical end of so much erudition was didactic poetry, which, in the Alexandrian period, really had a renaissance. The initiator of the reawakening was Aratus. He was born at Soli in Cilicia about 315, and was a pupil by turns of the philosophers and of the poet Philetas, and a friend of Theocritus. He passed most of his life at the court of Macedon.<sup>2</sup> Among numerous works in prose and verse, he composed a noted didactic poem in two books, the *Phenomena* (Φαινόμενα): the first was an exposition of current notions of astronomy; the second treated signs of the times, or prognostics (Διοσημείαι). It is a popular meteorology.

Hesiod had made didactic poetry chiefly the grave, religious interpreter of an impersonal tradition. For the philosophers of the sixth and fifth centuries, it was the reasoning, ardent voice of individual intelligence proceeding to the conquest of truth. In Aratus it was neither. It was the elegant popularization of a science not

<sup>1</sup> Reinach, *Revue des Études grecques*, 1893, pp. 258–266.

<sup>2</sup> Editions by Kochly in the Didot *Poeta Bucolici*. II, Paris, 1851; and Maass, Berlin, 1893. Translation by E. Poste, London, 1880.

established by itself nor by tradition. Aratus limits his thoroughly literary ambition to translating into elegant verse the prose works of a true scholar, Eudoxus of Cnidus. There is danger in such a process that one will introduce a chilly, prosaic element. The passion of Lucretius, the exquisite melancholy of Vergil, are indispensable for its success. But Aratus was neither a Lucretius nor a Vergil; he was a highly talented Alexandrian, and nothing more. He has some of the merits of Boileau, but with less conviction and more elegance. He might be compared with Saint Lambert; like the poet of the *Saisons*, he is a good writer and versifier, precise, harmonious, and cold. He had a wide reputation, and his book became classic. Even great scholars like Hipparchus and Dionysius wrote commentaries on it. At Rome, Varro and Cicero translated, and Vergil imitated and surpassed it. In short, Aratus had the merit of bringing within reach of all cultured readers a science which, till then, seemed reserved for specialists.

**10. Apollonius of Rhodes.**—Over against these dainty writers, Apollonius is, in some ways, a reactionist. He dared to go back to the heroic epic, in spite of them. Yet it was only a partial reaction, for he was still much more Alexandrian and much less Homeric than he believed himself to be. He did, however, have considerable talent.<sup>1</sup>

As he was born at Alexandria, Rhodes was simply his adopted country, when his quarrel with Callimachus had forced him into exile. The date of his birth cannot be determined with precision. He was the pupil of Callimachus; while still young, he composed his *Argonautica*, in opposition to the counsel of his master; and he ended his life at Rhodes, where probably he finished his poem, and published the two successive editions of it.

The *Argonautica* is in four books and has almost six thousand verses. In the first two books we have the reunion of the Argonauts, their departure, the voyage to Colchis; and in the last two, the acquisition of the fleece with Medea's assistance, and the return to Greece. A multitude of episodes, descriptions, and combats find their place in the action, and enrich it.

The poet's evident aim was to be the Homer of his age—to give to Greece, in a single poem, an *Iliad* and *Odyssey* adapted to the taste of the day. What is retained of ancient epic is the

<sup>1</sup> Editions by Lehrs in the Didot *Hesiod*, Paris, 1862; and by Merkel, Leipsic, Teubner, 1882.

French translation by De la Ville de Mirmont, Bordeaux, 1892. English translation by Preston, 3 vols., Dublin, 1803.

Articles by Sainte-Beuve, *La Médée d'Apollonius*, in *Portraits contemporains*, vol. V; and J. Girard, *Études sur la poésie grecque*, Paris, 1884.

marvels, the combats, the adventures, the catalogues. What is added is, first, scholarly erudition: geography, new myths, etymologies, popular, quaint customs, exotic or antiquated rites; and, secondly, depiction of love. Hence his poem may be called partly dead and partly living. The dead part is not only that in which he treats the traditional themes of epic, without having the ability to handle such subjects; but also that filled with erudition, which is naturally ill-adapted to poetry, and, above all, to this type of poetry. The living part is the enduring portrayal of love. There he could display all his talent, and it was considerable; he showed himself perhaps more of an innovator, more original, a greater poet than has commonly been supposed. We shall leave aside all that we have called dead in the poem. In it his merits and ~~defects~~ are in no way novel, but belong to his time—erudition, affectation, ingenious subtlety, a liking for the pretty rather than the beautiful, the absence of sincerity and emotion, and a composite style, in which research and the qualities of prose are combined in the manner of Callimachus. If Apollonius had produced only this, he would not deserve notice. But with the passion of Medea, everything was to change; not because the affectation of Alexandria is absent—for it appears again and again in the description—but because her love is a sincere, strong sentiment, a true passion. If it is not a Homeric passion, it is at least one worthy of epic as conceived by Vergil. Apollonius enlarged, but did not destroy, the frame of epic. He introduced love, and painted it with sufficient power to make it appropriate to the grandeur of the type; and sufficient originality to leave an imperishable memory.

The originality of his painting consists in a subtlety of analysis which, before his time, we do not find exemplified. Perhaps too little emphasis has been put upon the novelty of studying, at this date, hour by hour, as it were, the rise of a passion in the human heart, following its growth with exactitude, describing its uncertainties and painful struggles, and arriving slowly, without weariness, at the time of its final outburst, to describe this with admirable vigor and effectiveness. Euripides took only the first steps in the path of the minute psychological analysis of passion. The story of Medea, in the third book of the *Argonautica*, is that of a heart fallen a prey to an emotion which we see in its beginning; and, as it grows more powerful, we follow with deep sympathy through its various stages of joy, disappointment, and despair. From the first audience accorded by Æetes to Jason, from the first revery which comes to disturb her quiet, from her conversations with her sister Chalcippe, to the admirable scene where, in the temple of Hecate, she waits

for Jason, sees him coming, talks with him, and finally, unburdening her heart, resolves on flight, there is a continuous progress, a dramatic pulsation which animates the subtle analyses, and carries us along with an irresistible movement. It is the art of Vergil, of Racine, of a modern writer of romance. No less remarkable is the nature of the elements that enter into the painting. Medea is a young girl: her life has always been chaste, her imagination pure. She struggles against herself in dismay. Everything conspires against her will; the conduct of her sister reassures her; specious sophisms present themselves to her from every quarter. When she has resolved to be a criminal, she preserves still the delicacy of language and dignity of attitude which constitute her personality. The Medea of Apollonius gives us a presentiment of the *Phèdre* of Racine; and this does her no little honor. But—it may be objected—is such a noble passion in harmony with the other traits in the character of a powerful, sometimes cruel, magician? No, without doubt. This is the insurmountable difficulty in a situation composed of complex and contradictory elements. Even Racine, in *Phèdre* and *Iphigénie*, could not completely triumph over it. One can say in honor of Apollonius that, like all great artists, he had the cleverness to fuse the discordant elements into a whole sufficiently harmonious not to offend one's taste; and that, on the whole, what appears most prominent in his poem is the character of the passionate young girl, ardently affectionate despite her troubles, and capable of anything under the influence of an irresistible passion. The magician passes into the background, and can be forgotten without great difficulty.

Though the style of Apollonius is too composite to be of classic beauty, it has merits of the first order. The numerous speeches are extremely clever. Some of Medea's monologues are of admirable dramatic power. In its main features, the scene where Medea makes her final resolution has this nature. Imitations of the earlier poets, which, moreover, became the models followed by Vergil and Racine, are woven together into a really powerful fabric.<sup>1</sup>

"Meanwhile night threw its shadows over the land; on the sea, the sailors were watching from the ships Helice and the stars of Orion. The hour of slumber was awaited by the voyager on the ship and by the guardian who kept watch at the doors. The very mother who had seen her children perish was enveloped in deep slumber; the barking of the dogs in the city had ceased. No echo was heard any more; silence ruled the darkness of the night.

"But sweet sleep came not to Medea. A thousand cares, spring-

<sup>1</sup> III, 743-800 (the translation as given by H. de la Ville de Mirmont, excepting a few words).



ing from her love of Jason, kept her wakeful. . . . Constantly did her heart throb in her breast. As in a chamber a ray of sunlight quivers, reflected from the water that some one has poured into a caldron or a bucket; troubled by the rapid whirling, it leaps to this side and that, so did the young girl's heart beat within her bosom. . . .

"Now she said to herself that she would give the magic potion that would calm the bulls; now that she would refuse; she dreamed of ending her life, then of not dying, not giving the potion, bearing her trouble in silence. Finally, seating herself, she pondered and said:—

"'Poor mortal that I am! Enveloped as I am with evils, whither shall I turn? On every hand doth my heart find uncertainties; there is no healing for my sufferings, that cease not to torment me. Oh, if Artemis could have slain me with her swift arrows ere ever I had seen this man. . . . How, without letting my parents know, can I prepare the magic potion? What excuse shall I make to them? what ruse invent to conceal my helper? Shall I address myself to him when far from his companions? Unhappy me! Though he should perish, I could not hope for respite from my torment; though he were gone, my woes would end my life. Farewell, my modesty, farewell, my glory. Let him be saved by me, and go unharmed at the free option of his heart.'"

Quintilian<sup>1</sup> says of Apollonius that his poem merits respect for its sustained evenness of medium qualities. The judgment applies well to the beginning and end of the *Argonautica*, but it is unjust for the third book. The creator of the personage of Medea, though academic and Alexandrian in so many ways, had his hour of true inspiration and his ray of genius.

**11. Lycophron.**—The wordy virtuosity rendered fashionable by Callimachus was to lead to strange excesses. When the cult of the phrase and of fine writing was exalted more and more above the care for seriousness of thought, there were always eccentric writers who fell into the fustian under pretext of art and produced the unintelligible. This rôle was held at Alexandria by Lycophron, surnamed the "Obscure."<sup>2</sup> Born at Chalcis and attracted to Alexandria, like so many others, by the splendor of Philadelphus, he won there a great reputation as a dramatic poet, and was counted one of the celebrated tragic "pleiad." Besides some very short fragments of his works, we have a bizarre poem called *Alexandra*, which almost seems a fragment of some prodigious drama. It is an extraordinary tragic composition of 1474 verses, in which are reported, by a slave, apparently, the prophecies of Alexandra, or Cassandra, the daughter of Priam. They extend quite to the Alexandrian period. Their

<sup>1</sup> Quintilian, X. 1. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Editions by Kinkel, Leipsic, 1880; and Holzinger, Leipsic, 1895.

being almost unintelligible has given them celebrity. To interpret Lycophron was, for the ancient commentators, a very creditable professional feat. Yet, in this unbearable poetry, one must recognize that there was technical cleverness, and even the germ of a commendable idea. This idea was that of restoring to tragic style its ancient splendor. Since Euripides, it had come to resemble prose closely. But, with this aim in view, Lycophron adopted the processes of the old lyric style, those of Pindar and Æschylus, which he employed without restraint or taste, heaping one upon the other confusedly, with astonishing lavishness of pedantic and mythological lore. The whole was complicated by the proverbial obscurity of oracles. Lycophron's work did not lack talent, but it no longer strove to be in keeping with good taste. It had its interest only because it followed the fashion of a certain Alexandrianism.

**12. The Last Epic, Didactic, and Elegiac Poets.** — The poets just mentioned opened the way for every variety of composition. After them, for two centuries, came imitators, who performed the same tasks with varying success; yet not one of them was able to reach the highest rank. Their works have almost wholly perished. A few words will be sufficient to devote to them.

The leading representatives of epic were Euphorion and Rhianus. Euphorion, born at Chaleis in 276, was the librarian of Antiochus the Great from 224 to 187. He composed some mythological poems (*Dionysus, Hyacinthus, Hippomedon, Artemidorus*, etc.), works in an ornate though obscure style, which attached him to the group of Callimachus and Lycophron; and even Vergil seems to have admired him.<sup>1</sup> Rhianus, born in Crete, a contemporary of Eratosthenes, wrote in the second half of the third century. He was a philologist as well as a poet. His *Heracleid, Achaica, Thessalica*, etc., are little more than names for us. His *Messeniacæ* (Μεσσηνιακά) is better known on account of Pausanias, who drew from it his material for his chapter on Messenia; hence it is from Rhianus that we get the story of Aristomenes and of his marvellous escape. He seems to have written with much simplicity. To these names we may add that of Archias, celebrated chiefly as the teacher of Cicero — a ready and inexhaustible improviser, who wrote a poem on the *War with Mithridates*.

Didactic poetry at this time produced scarcely more than one work of note, the *Hermes* of Eratosthenes — if indeed, this was really a didactic poem. We have a fragment on the five zones whose character is didactic.<sup>2</sup> The style is in the taste of Aratus. But Eratosthenes

<sup>1</sup> *Bucol.* X, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Fragments in Meineke, *Analecta Alexandrina*, pp. 253–338. Published separately by Carl Robert, Berlin, 1878.

recounted in it the infancy of Hermes, telling how he caused the Milky Way to spurt across the sky by gnawing the breast of Hera, and describing his thefts, his travels, and the discovery of the lyre. There was, then, in the *Hermes*, something more than merely a didactic poem. Nicander of Colophon, born about the close of the third century, is frankly a didactic poet, and as frankly mediocre. His extant poems on the bites of animals and their remedies (Θηριακά) and on the antidotes to poisons (Ἀλεξιφάρμακα) are only tasteless compilations. His other works in verse and prose belong to history, geography, and natural history.

The mythological and romantic elegy, so much cultivated by the first generation of Alexandrians, still continued in honor. Here again we find the name of Eratosthenes, whose *Erigone* no doubt told the old Attic legends concerning the daughter of Icarius, and how she and her dog were changed into a constellation. After Eratosthenes, we must come down as far as the first century to meet any other elegiac poet of renown. It is Parthenius of Nicæa, the friend of Gallus, who came to Rome in 73 as a prisoner of war, and probably knew Vergil.<sup>1</sup> We know little more than the titles of his elegies (*Aphrodite*, *Delos*, *Crinagoras*) and those of other poems in hexameter (*Metamorphoses*, *Heracles*). But we have a prose work on the *Sufferings of Love*<sup>2</sup> which he composed for Gallus. It throws some light on the character of his usual inspiration, being a collection of legends about love adventures that ended, usually, in catastrophes or metamorphoses. Parthenius was a stylist of the school of Callimachus. In subject-matter and date, he differs little from Ovid.

**13. Continuance of the Epigram: Meleager; the Anthologies.** — Besides these various types, we meet in this period a lasting one in the epigram, which has flourished ever since, living longer than Hellenism. Its evident facility rendered it particularly attractive for simple amateurs. We know the names of more than forty epigrammatists of this period. Every one tried a hand at it. In the throng of artists and simple amateurs, talent was current coin; the rare thing was originality. We need mention only Dioscorides, Alcaeus of Messene, and Antipater of Sidon; and even these are merely agreeable, polished versifiers.

Meleager of Gadara in Syria, born about the middle of the second century, is much more interesting.<sup>3</sup> He was distinguished from

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in the Teubner *Mythographi Græci*, II, 1, 1896.

<sup>2</sup> Jacobs, *Anthology*, I, pp. 227-229.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* I. The article of Sainte-Beuve, *Portraits contemporains*, vol. V; and one by Henri Ouvré, *Méléagre de Gadara*, Paris, 1894. French translation by Pierre Louÿs.

most of his contemporaries by the personal character of his epigrams. A disciple of the Cynic philosopher Menippus, his countryman, he led a life of pleasure. His epigrams are filled with the echoing of his passion. Sometimes they are even licentious in tone, or weakened by fine writing. Generally they have the merit of sincerity. Some few attained emotion and beauty. When death had caught away from him Heliodora, whose beauty and skill he had often celebrated, he expressed his sadness in really elegant verses:—

“O that these tears, tears bitter to shed, could go to thee in Hades as a present, Heliodora, as a relic of my love. Upon thy tomb, where so often I have wept, I pour the libation of my sorrow, the souvenir of my affection. I, Meleager, sigh for thee, dear one among the deceased—sigh in sorrow, sigh vainly to Acheron. Alas! alas! where is the verdant branch that I so much loved? Hades has taken it, and the blossoming flower is tarnished with dust. Ah, at least, O Earth, her nurse, I pray thee on my knees, dear Mother, that she whom I so regret may be received with tenderness upon thy lap and in thy arms.”<sup>1</sup>

Meleager has another claim to recognition than his merit as a poet. He had the plan of collecting, with his own works, a select number of the songs, elegies, and epigrams of some forty Greek poets, from the classics of the seventh century to his own times. He called the collection the *Crown or Wreath* (Στέφανος). A long dedication in verse to his friend Diocles, which is still extant, explains the general title by the somewhat pretentious and subtle comparison of each poet with a particular flower. The *Crown* of Meleager was not exactly the first of the anthologies; for among others, Artemidorus of Ephesus had already formed a collection of bucolic poems. But it was probably the first body of poetry to be so rich and varied; and it had a great vogue. It was the model for all subsequent anthologies. We probably owe to it the preservation of some jewels of ancient Greek poetry, despite the vexatious habit by which the later authors of anthologies eliminated more and more of the ancient selections and substituted for them contemporary works.

The appearance of anthologies is a sign that Greek poetry, at the time to which we have come down, had grown old. Men were busily collecting its remains. It still continued to live and to produce works, though in a less vigorous vein. The great national inspiration of the classic ages had disappeared. The individualistic inspiration of modern writers was not yet in existence. Neither erudition nor fine writing could long keep alive the poesy yet

<sup>1</sup> Jacobs, *Anthology*, I, p. 109.



remaining in the Greek world. With the close of Alexandrianism, we reach an age of singular poetic sterility. If the Alexandrians were but rarely great poets, at least they cultivated poetry with taste and success. In the following period, for the first time, the Greek world will be seen to have forgotten almost wholly the Muses of Helicon.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### POLYBIUS AND THE LAST ALEXANDRIANS

1. Greece and Rome. 2. Polybius; his Life and Work. 3. Aim of Polybius; his History "General" and "Pragmatic." 4. Science in Polybius. 5. Art in Polybius. 6. Conclusion on Polybius. 7. History after Polybius. 8. Various Sciences. 9. Philosophy. 10. Rhetoric.

1. **Greece and Rome.** — While scholars and poets composed their works of erudition or polished their verses, Rome was growing and making ready for the conquest of the world. Mistress of Italy, freed from all fear of Carthage by the Second Punic War, she turned toward the Orient; and in the first half of the second century, she slowly laid her hand on Greece, which became a Roman province in 146. The same year, Carthage finally succumbed. Then the Greek kingdoms of the Orient, one after another, gave way before the legions, until at last, in 31 B.C., Egypt lost her independence. The whole civilized world was now Roman. The conquest of the Greek world by Rome had been gradual and steady; but it was of sufficient importance to have an effect on Greek literature. From the beginning of the period, Polybius had measured with profound scrutiny the power of the rising Empire, and thereby renewed history. If mathematical and physical sciences, grammar, and philology, owing to their nature, escaped the external influences and remained what they were before, philosophy and rhetoric were modified by contact with Roman ideals. In short, the whole epoch was a period of transition. Greek spirit, in the face of the new civilization and the powerful, original political organization, awoke from its quietude, asked itself questions concerning its own weal, and in the end, submitted to the influence of its masters, despite itself, or perhaps unconsciously.

2. **Polybius; his Life and Work.** — Polybius is not only the greatest historian of the period, but one of the greatest of all time, one of those in whose hands history underwent an important stage in its evolution. Though a writer of the second order, he is, in his conception of history and in the force of mind with which he realized it, the equal of Herodotus and Thucydides.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Editions by Dübner, Didot Collection, 1839; Hultsch, Berlin, 1867-1871; Dindorf-Büttner-Wobst, Teubner, 1882.

French translation by F. Bouchot, Paris, 1847. English translation by E. S. Shuckburgh, 2 vols., London and New York, 1889.

Consult: Fustel de Coulanges, *Polybe, ou la Grèce conquise par les Romains*, thesis of 1858.

He was the son of Lycortas, who, as friend and disciple of Philopœmen, after the latter's death in 183, became general of the Achæan League. Polybius was born at Megalopolis in Arcadia, probably between 210 and 205. He had the honor of bringing back the ashes of Philopœmen in 183, when the hero had fallen a victim to the Messenians. In the following years, together with his father, he was associated in speech and military action with all the political life of the League. During the struggle between Rome and Macedon (171-168), his attitude was one of prudent reserve with regard to Rome, notwithstanding the opposition of the democratic party, which ardently sought the support of the senate. After the final defeat of Perseus, Polybius was one of the thousand hostages, all aristocrats, which the League delivered to the Romans. At Rome he formed ties of friendship with Fabius and Scipio, the sons of Paullus Æmilius. Owing to these relations, he was allowed to reside at Rome itself, instead of being sent, like the other hostages, into some Italian municipality. He was forty years of age at the time. His familiarity with one of the most illustrious families of the Roman aristocracy brought him into touch with all the Roman politicians of consequence. He could study at first hand the government of the republic when it was at the very zenith of its splendor. He found in it all that his serious, reflective spirit had failed with regret to find in his own country — a well-to-do aristocracy, a strong organization, and conformity with discipline and morality. These doubled the effect of its material forces. He devoted himself wholly to observation of this new world, which he was better able than any one else to understand and appreciate. In 150, with the other hostages, he obtained the right to return to his own country. He availed himself of the privilege, but often came back to Rome, his adopted fatherland. In 146 he was with Scipio in Africa. He tried without success to prevent the final revolution of Greece: yet he won at least the gratitude of his countrymen by useful intercession in their favor after their defeat. The second part of his life was occupied by the composition of his work and by numerous travels to Libya, Spain, and Gaul. He died at the age of eighty-two, consequently about 125, owing to a fall from a horse.

He wrote a *Life of Philopœmen*, a *Treatise on Tactics*, and an account of the *Capture of Numantia*, to-day all lost. His chief work was his great *History* (*ἱστορίαι*) in forty books, giving the history of the world during the seventy-five years from the beginning of the Second Punic War (221) to the capture of Corinth (146). This account begins only with the third book, the first two being occupied with an introduction, in which he treats briefly the events

that took place after 264, the date to which Timæus brought down his work. The *History*, then, really begins with the First Punic War. The main epoch treated is that during which Rome, in less than fifty-three years (221–168) brought under her sway, as Polybius says,<sup>1</sup> “almost the whole inhabitable world.” But the ample picture has not been preserved intact. The first five books are complete, and reach the battle of Cannæ; of the next thirteen books, we have long extracts; but of the last twenty-four, we have only some fragments, very unequal in importance and extent.

**3. Aim of Polybius; his History “General” and “Pragmatic.”** — The nature of the events he recorded seemed to him to demand a new form of exposition. Till then, history had been “particular,” as the historians gave the account of each city or state by itself, because each had lived in isolation and came in touch with the others only by accident. He saw, however, that now all the particular histories joined each other and interlaced. The world lived a common life, was interested in the same struggles and dominated by one and the same policy. Like a heart in the great organism, Rome was everywhere operative. So history needed to become “general.” The problem was not that of composing a series of particular histories, but that of showing the unity of all the apparently incoherent facts whose theatre extended over the whole inhabitable world. These facts all tended toward the same goal, the final triumph of the power of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

He wished to write also a “pragmatic” work, devoted to the precise and almost technical exposition of politics and war, which form the material of history. For most historians, the composition of history was office-work, for which erudition and eloquence sufficed. Thus it had been treated by Timæus, the most celebrated of all, and that sufficed for the public which applauded him. Such a conception of history seemed to Polybius false and ridiculous. The historian, doubtless, must know books; but above all, he must understand politics and war. His great function is to bring to statesmen the information they need. This cannot be done with fine phrases nor by diligent research into mythology. Concrete things are the material, and they must be treated with seriousness and precision — with “method.”<sup>3</sup> If one should thus seem “severe and monotonous” to certain readers, so much the greater the fault of the readers. The essential thing is to win the approbation of critical minds, who seek in history practical, effective lessons. These ideas are enunciated again and again.<sup>4</sup> Their importance and novelty were evident. Surrounded by rhetoricians and incompetent scholars, Polybius imi-

<sup>1</sup> Polyb. I, 1, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 3–4.

<sup>3</sup> Μεθοδικῶς, IX, 2, 5.

<sup>4</sup> See especially IX, 1–2.



tated the manner of Thucydides ; and his application of that manner to his theme is well worthy of our admiration.

**4. Science in Polybius.**—The scientific value of his work is extremely high, owing both to a profound technical preparation, and to a really philosophic general culture.

Politics and war—the things of which he spoke—he comprehended thoroughly. As we have seen, he had written a special technical treatise on tactics. He had personally taken part in politics, before conversing about it with élite Roman statesmen. To get an idea of the theatre in which the events took place, he made numerous geographical travels; after the comprehension of the things, the knowledge of the places was, in his opinion, the most important of the qualities useful for the historian. Not only had he visited as a soldier or merchant the greater part of Greece and Italy, Egypt and Sicily, but he made real journeys of exploration into Libya, Iberia, and the parts of Gaul near the Ocean. He scoured the Alps that he might understand the route of Hannibal. He counts himself happy, in one passage, because the conquests of Alexander, and afterward those of Rome, had brought about the unity of the world, and so made travel, if not easy, at least possible.<sup>1</sup> He had read the writings of his predecessors; without believing that erudition could displace all else, he did not scorn erudition. His work abounds in names of men who had treated the same subjects before him. He consulted archives and sometimes cited documents *in extenso*. The use he made of a bronze tablet at Iacinium in estimating the condition of Hannibal's forces is remarkable.<sup>2</sup>

He used his sources critically and impartially. His criticism was chiefly that of sound judgment illuminated by the direct study of materials; an account of a battle presenting impossible circumstances he rejected without hesitation, whatever the authority of the author; and he excelled in distinguishing the possible from the impossible. His impartiality was based upon full knowledge. "In ordinary life," he says, "certain prejudices are permissible. . . . But when a man assumes the character of historian, he must forget his personal sentiments, must often praise and extol his enemies or convict of error and pursue with severe reproaches those whom he loves best."<sup>3</sup> This policy he carried out with admirable courage. As a man, he was devoted to his countrymen under all circumstances; as a historian, he censures their faults and errors, with melancholy but clear insight, and severely.

Aside from these qualities, indispensable for every historian worth the name, he had others of a still higher order, which give his

<sup>1</sup> Polyb. III, 58 and 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* III, 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* I, 14, 4-5.

work its personal character. He had a profoundly philosophic spirit. Though not specially Stoic, Peripatetic, or Platonic — belonging to no sect — his thought was influenced and completely permeated by the essentials of Greek philosophy, or, if one chooses, of Greek learning. He believed that, like all knowledge, history has for its principal object the explanation of facts, the discovery of causes — not the first cause, which some seek in the will of the gods and others in chance; but the secondary causes, which alone are really accessible to the historian and alone useful for the statesman. To begin with, one must understand what constitutes a cause (*αἰτία*), and not confound, like so many historians, the cause of a historic event with the accident that was its occasion (*πρόφασις*), or its point of departure (*ἀρχή*). A cause is connected with its effect by logical necessity. The will of individuals often is a cause; the policy of Hamilcar, for example, was an important element in bringing about the Second Punic War. But the most important causes, those that have the most lasting, most extensive influence, are not individual. More than any of his predecessors, he insisted on general causes: the customs and traditions of cities, and particularly their military organization and political institutions, which seemed to be, in the words of Isocrates, the “soul of states.” The profound researches of Aristotle and his school concerning the constitutions of Greek and foreign cities had popularized this conception, which is found even in Herodotus and particularly in Thucydides. But Polybius was the first to assign it a preponderating influence in history. His studies of the constitutions of Sparta, Carthage, and Rome became classic and were admirable monuments of sound, though novel, science. He wrote likewise on the military organization of the Romans. He was not free from error, notably a rationalistic prejudice which saw in a constitution the work of some almost superhuman legislator, some mature philosopher, who worked freely and with fulness of knowledge in the realm of human society, as Plato fashioned the elements of his ideal city. His Lycurgus, for example, is too much a theorist of politics. These imperfections are inevitable, the mark of the time, and the necessary price of great progress. They take away nothing from the justness of detail or the profundity of the general conception.

Another essential element of his philosophy of history is the boldness with which he embraces in a general view the entire development of the great nations and cities that he studied. He knew well that institutions are not fixed, that a city passes successively from one political form to another, and that such great organisms are born, live, and die. He knew the regular rhythm, so to speak, of these

changes, and took careful note of the stage which each city had reached at the time when he studied it, in order to estimate its vital power. At the time of the war with Hannibal, Rome was in the fulness of its maturity, Carthage in its decline. Hence there was necessarily a difference in the place to be assigned to them, though they seemed ever so much alike. This inevitable law of evolution (ἀνακύκλωσις)<sup>1</sup> is applicable to all peoples: Rome herself cannot escape it; she is flourishing to-day, but already the germs of decline are operative within her; and the day will come that will achieve the overthrow of the constitution that has been her strength.<sup>2</sup> Evidently Polybius lays himself open here to criticism. Historical laws sometimes seemed to him to have a character too simple, too rigorous — too “mechanical,” in the words of Fénelon. It is nevertheless true that his vigorous effort to master the details of fact and classify contingencies under a superior necessity, is often as clear-sighted as it is bold. He is almost always right. Through believing in the empire of historical laws, he became almost a prophet. Even if one is tempted to dispute certain of his prophecies, one cannot but admire the lofty serenity of his spirit, and his profound faith in science (θεωρία), so often justified by the facts.

The scientific character of his history is no less manifest in his bold reform of the processes of exposition. He rejected discourses, — not merely frivolous, oratorical harangues in the manner of Timæus, which had nothing in common with historical truth nor even with good sense, — but also direct speeches in the manner of Thucydides, which are true with a general, philosophic truthfulness, but false in form. He found the misrepresentation in form distasteful. Like modern writers, he limited himself to an analysis in the form of direct discourse when dealing with the counsels of statesmen. The historians of his time took pleasure in mythological digressions, oddities of erudition, and ingenious pretended etymologies. He swept away these vain ornaments with the same resolution as the discourses. His accounts have precision and fullness; he takes careful note of time, though sometimes, wrongly, deriding the minute calculations of Timæus. He describes fully his localities and studies his institutions at length; in short, he is adequate, not only in prefaces, according to the usage of the time, but also in the course of the exposition, whenever he deems it well to clear up some idea or important fact.

**5. The Art of Polybius.** — Unfortunately his art is not on so high a plane as his science. His style is really bad, and his composition, though much superior, presents grave defects.

<sup>1</sup> Polyb. VI. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* VI, 58.

His essential fault is due, not to a negligence that would be excusable in a man of action and might prove to be a merit, but to an attempt at fine writing. He does not know what good style is. His vocabulary, though taken from the current speech of the educated classes, is overcharged with abstract, technical terms. Instead of avoiding them, he apparently delights in them. He loves useless, pretentious, awkward jargon. What is worse, he abounds in vague, inexpressive terms, epithets suitable to none because applicable to almost all—such as the adjective *ὀλοσχερής* (considerable, important), of which he made great misuse, or *προειρημένος* (aforesaid), which he employs constantly. His sentences are long and prolix, not by accident, but by choice. He aims at fulness and oratorical rhythm. He expects to attain this by using two words where one would suffice, and by lengthening his sentences to half a page. He avoids hiatus as a true disciple of Isocrates; but the scruple appears like affectation amid so many faults.

His invention is better. His mind is sound and can explain things with precision or mark with exactness the sequence of events. His narratives are clear, even though not vivid nor picturesque. As his dissertations are managed with skill, their lack of imagination is less noticeable. So at times he enlivens them with eloquence or clever witticisms. But he has too abundant dissertation. It is his hobby. He is always breaking the narrative to insert his opinion. A professor of politics and military art, he constantly pours forth instruction. His dictum is generally proper and judicious, yet uncalled for.

**6. Conclusion on Polybius.**—He has been judged very diversely. A purist in rhetoric like Dionysius of Halicarnassus would probably be offended with his style and fail to see his merit. A precise critic like Fénelon, though according him better justice, would be pained to find him so prolix, so attached to formulas. On the contrary, philosophical historians like Bossuet or Montesquieu have honored him more fully, and profited by his precept and example. They are more nearly right than the others. If one is ready to say that a historian's first duty is not so much to charm as to instruct, then their action is to be commended. Polybius is not an artist, and so differs from what one expects in a Greek historian. But he is one of three or four in antiquity who caused history to make rapid and permanent advances. His conception of the part in the life of a people played by customs and institutions is truly ingenious. His application of it is clever. On the power of Rome or the decadence of Greece, he holds opinions that show deep insight on his part and that are applicable far beyond the objects to which he applies them. One feels con-



stantly in reading him that, in the study of particular facts, he brings one face to face with reality. His account of Hannibal's march from Spain into Italy is, on the whole, of great clearness, as compared with that of Livy. Livy is more picturesque, dramatic, and amusing. He is really an imitator of Polybius, but much less satisfactory in detail, less able, and less intelligible.

**7. History after Polybius.** — The genius of Polybius went so far beyond the spirit of his time that, as a matter of fact, he had no pupils nor imitators. With his successors, we return to the erudite, eccentric, uncritical manner of the Alexandrians. We do not know the writers well. Hence we merely mention them without emphasis. Apollodorus of Athens lived at Pergamon under Attalus II, and was chiefly a mythographer. His chief work was a *History of the Gods* (Περὶ θεῶν) in twenty-four books, a vast collection of all the legends found in poets and historians. Metrodorus of Scepsis (middle of the third century), a scholar and rhetorician, was the author of a history of Tigranes. Artemidorus of Ephesus, his contemporary, wrote a *Geography* which was one of the sources of Strabo. Alexander of Miletus, surnamed Polyhistor — the Student or the Scholar — came to Rome as a prisoner of war under Sulla, and was liberated by Lentulus. He was a prolific, erudite compiler, treating stories of the marvellous, the succession of philosophers, and the manners and customs of the Orient, particularly of the Jews. Castor of Rhodes, in the same period, wrote a chronological *résumé* (Χρονικά), which pretended to give the date of all reigns and of all eponymous magistrates from Ninus to Pompey.

**8. Various Sciences.** — The mathematicians, medical writers, naturalists, grammarians, and philologists are of no greater importance. We are on the extreme borders of literature, and even the works that were produced have disappeared. Only two or three names can find place in this review.

The mathematician Hipparchus of Nicæa in Bithynia lived in the middle of the second century, perhaps mostly at Rhodes. He was the greatest astronomer of antiquity. Although coming after Aristarchus of Samothrace, he committed the error of continuing to consider the earth as the centre of the universe. But his studies of the movements of the stars and their distances from the earth are the work of an able mind. He added to mathematics proper by the invention of trigonometry; and he improved map-drawing. Hero of Alexandria (beginning of the first century) wrote treatises *On Drafting Instruments* and *On Automata*. His works are interesting, and still in existence.

In grammar, the great name of the period is that of Dionysius

Thrax, who was born at Alexandria about the middle of the second century. He came of a Thracian family. He was a pupil of Aristarchus, and the first to attempt presenting as a whole the science of grammar, which had been unorganized till then. His *Grammar* had prodigious success; for twelve centuries it was reproduced, commented upon, abridged, amplified, and translated. We have some revisions and partial translations.<sup>1</sup> Tyrannio the Elder, his disciple, is famous chiefly for his revision of the unedited works of Aristotle, which Sulla had just brought to Rome.

The chief representative of philology was Didymus, born at Alexandria and surnamed Χαλκέντερος, "the Bronze Constitution," because of his prodigious literary activity. Apparently he died in the time of Augustus, after having embodied in a multitude of writings the results of his researches on all subjects connected with philology. When one has commended his untiring energy and intense labor, it seems that sufficient emphasis has been laid on his memory.

**9. Philosophy.**—The philosophy of the period is more interesting. At least two remarkable names, Panætius and Posidonius, are found.

Panætius, born at Rhodes in the second quarter of the second century, a disciple of Crates of Mallos, lived for a long time at Rome in the circle of the Scipios, where he formed the acquaintance of Polybius. A Stoic, though not rigid, he was almost an Eclectic. In his style, unlike the rigid Stoics, he aimed to please ordinary people. We can no longer read his treatises, *On Duty* (Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος), *On Providence*, and *On Politics*; but we know the favor with which they were regarded by Cicero, and how much he imitated them. It is hardly to be doubted that the elegant moderation of Panætius owed something to the influence of the originality of the Scipios, the patrons of wisdom and good grace.

Posidonius of Apamea in Syria was the pupil of Panætius. He also came to Rome, but lived chiefly at Rhodes, whither Cicero, Pompey, and other illustrious Romans went to hear him. As a philosopher, philologist, historian, and geographer, he had an immense reputation. His treatise *On Duty* had considerable influence over Cicero. His *History* was a continuation of that of Polybius. His work *On the Ocean* was the result of personal explorations, and added something to the geographical knowledge of his time. He was, in short, a highly cultivated man.

The Epicurean Philodemus of Gadara, who also lived in the time of Cicero, merits mention only because the discoveries at Her-

<sup>1</sup> Text edited by Uhlig, Leipsic, 1883.

culaneum have given us a large number of mediocre writings by him. As for Ænesidemus, whose works have perished, his name is well known on account of his attempt, made about this time, to reorganize the school of Pyrrho. His *Pyrrhonian Discourses* (Πυρρώνειοι λόγοι), in eight books, are often cited by the ancients.

**10. Rhetoric.**—Like philosophy, rhetoric shows a tendency to innovation. But here, too, brilliant names and lasting works are wanting. It is not till somewhat later that the reaction against the bad taste of Hegesias was to have notable results with Cæcilius of Calacte and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. For the present, we are only at the beginning of the movement. Under the influence of the school of Pergamon, which was much devoted to the study of Attic writers, and under that of Rome, which brought all minds capable of reflection to seriousness, a reaction against the daintiness and fine writing of the old rhetoric of Asia began to make itself felt. Some returned to the Atticism of Lysias; others, the New Asiatics, trying, no doubt, to imitate Isocrates, produced a verbose, inflated eloquence; still others tried to follow a medium course, patterning after the style of Hyperides. The last group, headed by a certain Meneceles of Alabanda, was brought into prominence chiefly by Apollonius and Molo, who taught at Rhodes.<sup>1</sup> Cicero was a pupil of Molo. We no longer have any of Molo's writings; but his literary career, owing chiefly to his illustrious pupil, is still somewhat definitely known.

We have come upon the names of the Scipios, Pompey, and Cicero rather often in our study of this period. It is a sign that we are nearing the end of the transition, and about to enter upon a new phase of activity. This corresponds to the literary, as well as the political, primacy of Rome, which had become the capital of the civilized world.

<sup>1</sup> Polybius was himself son of Molo, and the second Molo was also called Apollonius. Hence arise certain confusions that must be guarded against.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### FROM AUGUSTUS TO DOMITIAN

1. General View of the Imperial Period.
2. Character of Greek Literature from Augustus to Domitian.
3. Greek Historical Writing at Rome. Diodorus Siculus.
4. Later Historical Writing. Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Strabo. Lesser Historians.
5. Jewish History under the Flavian Emperors. Flavius Josephus.
6. Philosophy. Pythagoreans and Stoics. First Efforts of Neo-Platonism: Philo the Jew.
7. Grammar, Rhetoric, and Literary Criticism. Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Cæcilius.
8. Poetry in the First Century.

**1. General View of the Imperial Period.**<sup>1</sup> — With, or shortly before, the establishment of the Empire, at about the middle of the first century B.C., the last period of Greek literature opens. It continues till the reign of Justinian, or even later; for it is as difficult to assign a precise final limit as to fix a definite beginning. It is an epoch, consequently, of more than seven centuries. Let us note briefly a few of its leading traits, that we may discover its principal divisions.

The first century of the Empire, from Augustus to Domitian, is, from the point of view of Hellenism, almost barren of original works. Owing to the destruction of the Hellenic kingdoms and their absorption into Rome, Greek life no longer had an abiding-place, so to speak, though it was partly transplanted to Rome and flourished there. The century may be regarded as a period of transition.

With the advent of the Flavian emperors, fondness for literature was once more shown in the Greek world by the rapid development of a form of oratory known as sophistic. There appeared also a moral and religious philosophy of considerable importance. Thus there was a renaissance which occupied the second century. It was completed in the third by the establishment of the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus and Porphyry, through which Hellenism was crystallized into a body of doctrines opposing the widening influence of Christianity.

The beginning of the fourth century and the reign of Constantine mark the advent of a third and final period, which continues for

<sup>1</sup> Consult on the whole period: Duruy, *Histoire des Romains*, vols. III–VII; and Hertzberg, *Die Geschichte Griechenlands unter der Herrschaft der Römer*, 3 vols., Halle, 1866–1875.



about three centuries to the limit above indicated. It is characterized by the rapid extension and triumph of Christianity, which, turning to profit the culture of Hellenism, made it flourish anew in the fourth century, and then left it slowly to degenerate and perish.

**2. Character of Greek Literature from Augustus to Domitian.** — Of these three periods, the first is naturally that upon which we shall place the least emphasis. No really superior writer is to be found. Rome had become the centre of the world; the most intelligent and active Greeks came there to live, or at least resided there most of the time. Many of them were in the service of emperors or senators, and devoted themselves principally to the forms of literature best suited to interest their patrons. The literature of imagination and poesy was reduced to mediocre importance. There was no use for oratory; it was confined to the schools. Still, all that was of practical utility found encouragement and favor. There arose historical and geographical works, generally encyclopædic in character, whose chief object was to bring together scattered information. Criticism of ancient texts, with all the needful grammatical sciences, made progress. Philosophy, in its more practical forms, was certain to have auditors and readers. There was more toil than genius, more assiduity than invention. We shall meet with names that cannot be ignored and works that are often cited; but, on the whole, nothing worthy of more than passing mention.

**3. Greek Historical Writing at Rome. Diodorus Siculus.**<sup>1</sup> — Let us begin with historical writing, the literary form then most in favor.

The first of the historians is Diodorus Siculus. No other adheres more closely to the spirit of the preceding period. A summarizer of the earlier historians, it would not be true to say that he imitated them; in reality, his work has no existence apart from those upon which it is based. Born about 90 B.C. at Agyrium in Sicily, he devoted almost his whole life to preparation for historical work, by travel, and by study in libraries. He made numerous long visits to Rome, where, he tells us, he found the necessary scientific resources for the great enterprise to which he devoted himself. His thirty years of elaboration extend roughly from 460 to 430. Apparently, his work was finished and published in the early years of the reign

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Dindorf, 5 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1866-1868; Fr. Vogel, 5 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1890, and years following. English translation by Booth, London, 1814.

Consult: H. Estienne, *Brevis Tractatus de Diodoro et eius Scriptis*, in Dindorf's edition, vol. V; Gatterer, *De Operis Historici a Diodoro Compositi Genere ac Virtutibus*, *ibid.*; Clinton, *Fasti Hellenici*, II. p. xxi; G. Kiessling, dissertations on the sources of Diodorus in *Rheinisches Museum*, 1876, and years following.

of Augustus. It was probably given to the public under the title of a *Library of History* (Ἱστοριῶν βιβλιοθήκη).

He proposed to unite in a synthetic exposition and in readily accessible form the mass of facts which his contemporaries were obliged to seek in various works: every century from the age of legend to his own times; every people, barbarian, Greek, and Roman. All the elements of historical and geographical knowledge, the history of institutions and customs, and of arts and letters, were to have their place. It was a real encyclopædia that he proposed to write; and undoubtedly his project had grandeur and a just appreciation of the needs of the times.

In its plan, the author wished to associate chronological order with logical classification. Though taking care, in general, to follow the order of time and to fix the precise dates by means of a concordance between the various systems of chronology that had been in use, he refused to parcel out his narrative year by year. He aimed to divide it into periods large enough to show without interruption complete series of events. This intention he had conceived and matured by reading Ephorus; but he had not the power of historical comprehension to realize it in a wholly satisfactory manner. In his preface he gives us almost a table of contents of his *Library* (I, iv, 6 and 7). It was divided into forty books, comprising a period of 1138 years, without counting the era preceding the Trojan War, when there was no chronology. The forty books were divided into three groups. The first was on the mythical period anterior to the Trojan War. It comprised six books, three for the primitive history of the barbarians, and three for that of the Greeks. Of these, we have only the first five, and some fragments. The second group, from the Trojan War to the death of Alexander, included eleven books, of which seven have been preserved. They treat the most important period of early ancient history, that from 480 to 323. The third group, from the death of Alexander to Cæsar's conquest of Gaul, had twenty-three books. We have only the part on the events that occurred between 323 and 302 — perhaps three books in all. Hence only fifteen of the forty books are extant — a little more than a third of the whole.

For antiquity, the merit of this work of popularization was that it offered a convenient summary which made direct reference to the original authors needless. To this fact was due its renown, which became greater as real historical science declined. In the Byzantine epoch, he came to be looked upon as the most scholarly of classic historians, for he was regarded as representing them all. In modern times, since the relish for history and the comprehension

of it have been revived, though his *Library* is still valuable for the quantity of information it preserves, yet, considered from the point of view of science or of art, it merits severe censure.

This is chiefly because it does not itself show evidence of critical acumen. For Diodorus was only a compiler. Generally, if not always, he was content to follow his authorities step by step as he abridged them; never, or almost never, did he do any original work, or compare them with one another. The authors he preferred were not necessarily the best informed, but those who, by offering a narrative that was continuous and not too far out of proportion with his plan, lent themselves most easily to his purpose. His worth, therefore, as an authority in history, is precisely the worth of these authors, — with this exception to his disadvantage, that, in abridging them, he may sometimes have altered their testimony. His chronology, on which he loved to pride himself, is a noteworthy example of scant knowledge: for it was a mere juxtaposition or superposition of one system upon another, with no thought as to whether they were in agreement or not.

Despite the apparent and superficial order above mentioned, there is the same shortcoming in his interpretation of events and in his composition. He has no general scheme by which to establish homogeneous groups of facts in the universal history, nor any idea of the progress or decadence of peoples, of the causes which bring them into contact, of their mutual indebtedness, or of the march of civilization. The organization of great empires, the development of the power of Rome, in a word, the dominant facts which embrace all others, do not seem to have impressed him. He lacked philosophy. He saw everywhere, indeed, the action of Providence; but, as he conceived it, this action was reduced to a puerile distribution of rewards and punishments. He had, moreover, no practical experience either as a statesman or as a military man.

As a writer, his best quality was general clearness. He wrote, however, with unreflecting facility and in a colorless style. Constantly he uses the abstract, vague terms which, in his time, took the place of the precise, concrete expressions of the earlier period. He is almost dry in the exposition of facts; in his prefaces, when he makes general observations, his style is apt to be bombastic. He believed that at least he deserved praise "for not having misemployed harangues" (XX, 1).

**4. Later Historical Writing. Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Strabo Lesser Historians.**<sup>1</sup> — After Diodorus, we should place next in the

<sup>1</sup> For Dionysius of Halicarnassus, see *infra*, p. 486. For Strabo, Casaubon, Paris, 1620; C. Müller and F. Dübner, *Strabonis Geographia*, with a Latin

series of historians, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for his *History of the Early Centuries of Rome*. We shall, however, simply mention him for the moment, as he is a critic of literary art rather than a historian. It will be more convenient to speak of his history in connection with his rhetorical works, since his history is so intimately dependent upon them.

The most important historical writer of the time is Strabo. He shows markedly the good influence which the establishment of Roman unity exercised on historical writing. Nothing could more rapidly develop in a reflective mind the philosophy of history than the growth of the Roman Empire. As yet nothing had brought so vividly to light certain laws of the evolution of humanity. Such a philosophy was not strongly marked in Strabo; yet it was more so than in many of his contemporaries.

We know but little of his life. He was born at Amasea in Pontus about 60 B.C., and came of a family once prominent and wealthy. He attended celebrated schools in his youth, and embraced the Stoic philosophy. His instinct as a geographer and historian impelled him to visit a large part of the empire. Not only was he fond of sight-seeing, but still more so of reading. Polybius and Posidonius were really his masters. All his leisure time was absorbed by their works. When not travelling, he dwelt apparently either at Rome or in his own land. He died probably a little before 25 A.D., after having lived through the reign of Augustus and part of that of Tiberius. His first work entitled *Historic Studies* (Ἱστορικά ὑπομνήματα) is lost. It was written in the early years of Augustus's reign and had forty-seven books. Aside from an introduction summarizing the earlier periods, it began with the date at which Polybius stopped, the destruction of Carthage in 146; and it continued till the establishment of the Empire. The existing fragments do not enable us to get a precise idea of its nature. Apparently rather aiming to draw from history wise counsels than to give a scientific narrative, he limited himself mostly to important events, to the neglect of minor matters. This at least is what he asserts in his *Geography* (I, 13). The point of view is broad, lofty, and philosophic; and no doubt was due in part to Polybius, his master, and in part to the influence of the age.

In any event, his reputation rests to-day upon another work, his *Geography* or *Geographic Studies* (Γεωγραφικά), which are preserved almost in their entirety.

translation and maps, Paris, Didot, 1858; Meineke, *Strabonis Geographia*, 3 vols., Leipzig, Teubner, 1853. Historical fragments in C. Müller, *Fr. Hist. Græc.*, *sup. cit.*, vol. III.

Consult: Marcel Dubois, *Examen de la géographie de Strabon*, Paris, 1891.



It was composed in the earlier years of Tiberius; and was like the former work in its fundamental design, but different in its setting and the proportion of the elements composing it. Although, in both, history and geography were thoroughly mingled, history was predominant in the former, and geography in the latter. And since he addressed the same public in both, he must have used the same method. He left aside all that interested only specialists, and neglecting minute details, selected and condensed into a clear and brief account what educated men needed to know, especially those who took part in public affairs. Hence there was merely enough mathematical geography to demonstrate a few indispensable ideas, but very much physical geography, to show the conformity and special fitness of various regions to the life of the people in them, and much political geography, assigning the races of men to their localities in the outline that had been traced, and explaining how they had reached their present condition by noticing what use they had made of the lands and waters they possessed. It was, in short, a philosophical humanistic geography, tending to resemble history, though preserving its proper character. It seems that, in antiquity, no one conceived this idea so clearly as Strabo.

The work comprises seventeen books. It shows a just, reflective spirit, and a mastery of the subject-matter. The author aims to make a complete work; but he makes his account proportionate to the interest that each region seems likely to have for his readers. The Mediterranean, in his view, is the centre of the world. Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor are the regions on which he dwells longest. He used, in describing these, essentially all that had been written on the subjects he treated, whether by Homer, whom he loved to quote, or by later authors down to his own day. This, too, he did critically, not as a compiler. Even more than the masters in his line of research, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus, Polybius, Posidonius, whose writings he used abundantly, Strabo keeps his independence and his right of choosing among their accounts. Everywhere, even in his errors, there is a manifest fondness for precision and a soundness of judgment. All in all, his statements are the best that could then be given.

As a literary work, the *Geography* had real value, yet not enough to make it a work of art. Meritorious qualities are not uncommon in it. Vivacity, grace, color, eloquence, grandeur, and charm of imagination are not there; but we do find sound exposition, well managed, correct, clear, and always sober, sometimes even to dryness. There is little description, but too many names. The author's personality scarcely appears except in the choice of details, in the method,

and, more fully, in the reflections. These are always brief, but just and interesting, and illuminate the greater part of the work. The merely picturesque escaped him. Though his book is interesting on account of the information it contains, it can never charm us. It has the materials for a literary work; yet it is not literary. The style does not show great originality. He merely used the language of the time without its fine writing. The exposition is clear and sane, but it lacks grace, is mediocre in reflection, heavy, and sometimes obscure. On the whole, it is colorless and rather commonplace, not particularly suited to the subject, nor delicately adapted to its purposes — monotonous and cold, lacking in character and also in beauty.

The author's reputation seems to have been slow in establishing itself. But this was amply atoned for in later times. The work offered so complete a picture of the world at the beginning of the Empire that it deservedly became classic. For the Greeks of the latest centuries Strabo was "The Geographer" (ὁ γεωγράφος); in later ages he was distinguished as the representative of a certain composite notion of geography, which, however, somewhat modified, has come into favor in our own day.

There is no need to enumerate all the lesser geographers and historians of the time whose names have been transmitted to us. Perhaps only Nicholas of Damascus should be mentioned, because his history strongly showed the encyclopædic tendency which was mentioned in connection with Diodorus, and was characteristic of the time.<sup>1</sup> He was a Syrian orator and philosopher, who lived chiefly at the court of Herod the Great and his sons. Their interests, by turns, he made his own. He was born in 64 B.C., and died probably in the early years of our era. Augustus knew him and was his patron. His principal work was his *Universal History* in 144 books, extending from the beginning of the world to the Augustan Age. It was written at the request of Herod; and in a century fond of great treasuries of easily accessible facts, it responded well to popular tastes. To judge from rather long fragments still extant, it possessed neither critical worth nor literary originality. Besides the *History*, Nicholas wrote a *Life of Augustus*, and an *Autobiography*, of which considerable fragments are preserved, a collection of *Traits of Character*, reduced to-day to a series of extracts, and various philosophical essays.

Under Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero erudition, which was closely akin in spirit to history as then written, inasmuch as it was more eager for details than judicious in its selections, likewise had great success in the Græco-Roman world. Among its representatives may

<sup>1</sup> Fragments in C. Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Græc.*, *sup. cit.*

be cited Juba II, king of Mauretania from approximately 50 B.C. to 20 A.D., who wrote some *Researches in Roman History*, *Notes on the History of the Theatre*, and various miscellaneous works; then the Greek Alexandrian Apio, a bombastic teacher at Rome under Tiberius and Claudius, chiefly celebrated for his projected *History by Races* (Ἱστορία κατ' ἔθνος). Of this he wrote at least one important section on the Egyptians (Αἰγυπτιακά) containing many diatribes against the Jews which were refuted by Josephus. Finally, the scholar Pamphila, a contemporary of Nero, was the author of a collection of *Historical Anecdotes* (Ὑπομνήματα ἱστορικά) often cited. All this, it must be owned, scarcely deserves a place in literature.

**5. Jewish History under the Flavian Emperors. Flavius Josephus.**<sup>1</sup>—By the side and apart from this series of writers on history, all of whom, to some extent, considered the world from the Roman point of view, and were interested in the past without distinction of race, a place must be reserved for a Jewish writer of the first century, who did not wish to see in the human race anything but his own people, and who devoted himself heart and soul to the task of making that people celebrated.

It was almost two centuries since the history of the Jews had begun to be part of the learning of the Greek world; for Judaism itself was being extensively propagated. Yet no great general work had put the history as a whole into the possession of educated and studious Greeks. The furious war that broke out in Judea under Nero gave to questions respecting the nation a much greater interest; and when Vespasian, who had begun the war, became emperor, and his son Titus, in the year 70, ended it by the capture of Jerusalem, the history of the Jews was associated in a way with that of the dynasty. The favorable moment brought to the front a man who was to profit by the new conditions.

Flavius Josephus, born at Jerusalem in the year 37 A.D., was a pupil in the Jewish schools, and came to take part when young in the events of his country's history. He was among those who attempted to stifle the revolt of 66, but who were afterward forced, in spite of themselves, to take part in it. He fought against the Romans, was taken prisoner by them, and from that time lived at the courts of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. These emperors granted him their favor, each in turn. He is said to have died at Rome in the reign of Hadrian.

His principal work, the *Jewish War*, in seven books, appeared in

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Dindorf, *Josephi Opera*, Paris, Didot, 1845; B. Niese, *Josephi Opera*, 7 vols., Berlin, 1887-1895; editio minor of the same in the same years; Naber, *Josephi Opera*, 6 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1889-1896.

the reign of Vespasian, who had urged him to write it. It is the story of the war begun under Nero and ending in the victory of Titus. At first a participant in the war and later an eye-witness of the siege, perfectly informed of everything, he tells us that he composed his account by the help of notes taken from day to day. Hence his work would offer the best possible guarantee of exactitude, had he not manifestly sought to please his patrons, and did not his party prejudices thwart his criticism. One feels too much in his narrative that he was a member of the Sanhedrim, a Pharisee, who had become an official writer of history. Yet he can be read with interest. The general sanity of the design, the precision and abundance of the details, the happy choice of traits of character mingled with descriptions, give him a real historical and dramatic value. The author sought in many a passage, it is true, to secure greater effectiveness by the employment of bad rhetoric; but these superadded passages are easy to eliminate. The work, when divested of them, recommends itself by considerable merits. Josephus wrote in Hebrew, then with the aid of chosen collaborators translated his work into Greek. Beneath the correct and careful mediocrity of the Hellenic version one can discern the firmness and clearness of his spirit.

He had treated only an episode of Jewish history. Encouraged by his success, he wished to make the whole history known to the world of letters. In 94 he published his *Antiquities of the Jews* (Ἰουδαϊκὴ ἀρχαιολογία) in twenty books, comprising the whole history of the Jews from the creation of the world to the year 66 of our era. Here it was continued by the story of the war already mentioned. The first part, a mere transcription of the Old Testament, is of but little interest to-day. But the last seven books, on Herod the Great and his successors, is a historical document that nothing could replace.

The other works of Josephus are either lost or of secondary value. It will suffice to mention the *Apology of the Jews* in two books, which is called, though improperly, *Against Apio*. In them Josephus demonstrates the antiquity of his race and its nobility, and defends it against calumnious imputations, notably those for which Apio was answerable, in the work already mentioned under his name. (*History by Races*; see p. 482.)

**6. Philosophy. Pythagoreans and Stoics. The First Efforts of Neo-Platonism: Philo the Jew.**<sup>1</sup>—Next to history, philosophy most

<sup>1</sup> The fragments of the philosophers are generally to be found in Mullach, *Fragm. Phil. Græc.* For Cornutus, one may refer to C. Lang, *Cornuti Theologia Græcæ Compendium*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1881; for Musonius to Peerlkamp, *Masonii Reliquiæ et Apophthegmata*, Haarlem, 1822; for Cebes to the Didot *Theophrastus*, with which the *Tablæ* is incorporated; also to Præchter, *Cebæti*



occupied the cultivated men of the time. But as yet it scarcely produced works of literary importance, and we must be content with a hasty survey of its career.

In the very beginning of this period, or better about the commencement of the first century, there appeared a curious revival of Pythagoreanism. Probably it began at Alexandria; from Egypt, the doctrine, in its new form, spread to Rome, where we find it cultivated in the circle of Cicero. It was to continue in existence in this form for three or four centuries, but in a state of mediocrity.

Its place in literature is signalized by various works. These include a series of apocryphal writings, of uncertain date and origin, such as the *Golden Words* (Χρυσὰ ἔπη), which consist of moral and religious precepts designed as a daily rule for the Pythagoreans; the treatises on various subjects attributed to Timæus of Locris, Ocellus of Lucania, Brontinus, etc., and to some Pythagorean women; the anonymous collections of *Gnomes and Similitudes*; and a few fragments from various representatives of the sect, such as the Sextii, Sotion, Moderatus of Gades, and Areius Didymus. The Sextii were contemporary with Augustus and Tiberius; Sotion was a teacher of Seneca; and the others were contemporaries of Nero. The best known of the Pythagorean writings is the short allegorical composition called *Cebes' Tablet* (Κέβητος πίναξ). It is an imaginary allegorical picture of human life; and the explanation given constitutes a system of morals half Stoic and half Pythagorean. Although its date is indefinite, there is reason for believing it part of the movement of ideas of the first century after Christ.

Stoicism came to Rome earlier and was more widely popular there than Pythagoreanism. In the first century, it was represented by a somewhat large number of famous men. They were professors and preachers in general, rather than writers; and their works have not been preserved. Yet Cornutus, the teacher of Persius, has left us an *Abridgment of Greek Theology*, in which are found the etymological and symbolic interpretations given by the Stoic school to poetic and popular mythology. More interesting is the moralist C. Musonius Rufus, the teacher of Epictetus. His lectures in Greek were collected by one of his pupils, and some have been preserved in part in the *Florilegium* of Stobæus. It is an interesting but incomplete report, weakened, unfortunately, by the transcriber; and treats the Stoic teaching of the time.

*Tabula*, Teubner; for Philo to Holtze, *Philonis Opera Omnia*, 8 vols., Leipsic, Tauchnitz, 1851-1853; and Cohn und Wendland, *Philonis Opera*, in course of publication at Berlin since 1896. Consult: Ed. Herriot, *Philon le Juif*, Paris, 1898. [Philo is translated into English by C. D. Yonge. — Tr.]

The only philosopher of the period who attained any importance in literature is the Jew Philo. We have an ample collection of his writings.

Born about 20 B.C., at Alexandria, he seems to have passed most of his life in the midst of the important Jewish community established in his native city. There he attained eminence, owing partly to the position of his family, and partly to his talent and education. In the reign of Caligula he was sent on an embassy to Rome to defend the interests of his religion. With this exception, his entire life was spent in retirement, meditation, and instruction. He must have died in the reign of Claudius. His extremely numerous writings are mostly concerned with the philosophy of religion. Many were commentaries on the Bible. We have all but a few of them.

Their philosophic interest is due to their method as well as to their doctrine. The method was borrowed from his predecessors, and by them from the Stoics, and consists in the freest allegorical interpretation. He believed that almost never does the Bible mean what it seems to say; that beneath all or almost all the words there is a hidden meaning, whose discovery is the all-important thing. Though intending to be scrupulously faithful to the Jews' religion, he deduced from the sacred books whatever doctrine he might wish, even finding, more or less modified, the ideas of Plato. His teaching is, in fact, Platonic; but he is a mystic Platonist, in whom appears, in germ, the Neo-Platonism of the third century. His philosophy is essentially a theology. It recognizes a single god, as far removed as possible from the world; subordinate to this god, a Word (*Λόγος*), which is his emanation, and plays the part of intermediary between him and his creatures. With his theology is associated or mingled a system of morals, Stoic in its basis, but much like Christianity in its idea of divine grace. His moral system is mystical and often visionary, the dream of a mind that is nourished on good materials, but that would gladly leave its earthly body, rise to God, and live in Him a life of contemplation, full of joy and reverent affection.

What makes Philo original as a writer is the personality visible behind these ideas — a personality tender and pious, all animate with the religion of love. The sentiments that fill his writings, and his manner of expressing them, make him, from the literary point of view, almost an intermediary between Plato and the Christian Fathers. Suidas quotes an anonymous expression, which says that Philo "Platonized." This is true of both his style and doctrine. He resembles Plato in his easy facility, in the large, free current of his style, and in his well-arranged, though not periodic, sentence-

structure. Like Plato, though in a less degree, he has the gift of associating poetry with prose without loss, the power of inventing images, and the faculty of combining subtle dialectic with original grace of revery and sentiment. But he absolutely lacks the dramatic instinct which was so active in Plato. His fulness is almost always prolix, and soon becomes monotonous. His merit is not that he reproduced something of the style of Plato; but rather that he often expressed in their appropriate form his own original sentiments. He is the first prose writer who could speak to God, or of Him to men, with the tone of ardent piety and sincere reverence which was to be characteristic of the Christian writers.

**7. Grammar, Rhetoric, and Literary Criticism. Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Cæcilius.** — We have reserved for the end of this chapter a group of men who made a special study of language and the art of writing. They were not superior, nor even always equal, in talent, to those whom we have just mentioned; but they represented one of the principal elements of the revival which was then beginning.

Strictly grammatical studies, though still continued after the manner of the Alexandrians, cannot detain us even in passing; for in the first century they produced no eminent man and no considerable work. It will suffice to mention the grammarians Theo and Pamphilus of Alexandria; Aristonicus, a commentator of Homer; Heliodorus, a writer on metre; and the lexicographer Apollonius. Their works are lost or only partly preserved, and show how much attached the Greeks of this time were to the classic authors.

Rhetoric, in its technical forms, cannot claim our attention either. We may note merely the rivalry between the schools of Apollodorus and Theodorus. The former were followers of the rhetorician Apollodorus of Pergamon, who taught about the middle of the first century B.C.; the latter, of Theodorus of Gadara, a famous teacher in the time of Augustus and Tiberius. They quarrelled over the value of rules and classifications, the school of Apollodorus laying greater emphasis upon theory, that of Theodorus, upon experience and its results. In such discussions, which occupied the Greek schools throughout the first century and even later, one sees what interest young men took in the art of discourse at a time when oratory seemed extinct forever. Thus one can explain in advance the immense success which the masters of the art were to have in the century following.

But in this period of the literature what deserves to interest us most is criticism. It was represented chiefly by two men whose names are inseparable, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Cæcilius.

Yet the former is the only one of importance for us, as the latter's works have wholly disappeared.

Dionysius,<sup>1</sup> born at Halicarnassus in Asia Minor, came to Rome in the year 30 B.C., still a young man, and lived there till the close of the reign of Augustus. He taught under conditions of which we know little, probably more as a grammarian and critic than as a rhetorician. His writings represent him as in the midst of a circle of men of letters, Greeks and Romans, among them were some powerful patrons like Rufus Melitius and Q. Ælius Tubero. Excepting history, which, for him, was only a branch of rhetoric, literary criticism seems to have been his passion, and almost the sole occupation of his life.

As a critic he was, first of all, the heir of the commentators of Alexandria and Pergamon; and in him, we see perpetuated most of the traditions of Aristarchus and Crates. Yet he gave himself less than they to verbal interpretation, and occupied himself more with the main characteristics of the works and the men. Herein he probably followed the Peripatetics, especially Theophrastus. His principal observations were along the line of imitation, noting in each author what could be imitated, and indicating what particular purpose the imitation could serve. If his point of view is narrow, his taste is still more so. Endowed with acumen and a just, even delicate, sense of style, he was frightened or offended by everything in the classic authors that savored of too bold originality; and he said so in sincerity: "For the first thing necessary is not to deceive willingly, and not to sully one's conscience" (*On the Character of Thucydides*, c. 8). Hence the strange variation in the value of his criticism; he admires Demosthenes as he ought, but he has strange prejudices against Thucydides and Plato.

His *Studies on the Ancient Orators* is probably the oldest work of his that has reached us. We have the first part only, containing the studies on Lysias, Isocrates, and Isæus. The study of Lysias is particularly interesting, and is thoroughly fitted to make us appreciate the correctness of his criticism. The *Dinarchus* and the *First*

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Reiske, *Dionysii Opera Omnia*, 6 vols., Leipsic, 1774-1776; G. Kiessling, *Dionysii Historia Romana*, 5 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1860-1870; Jacobi, a new edition in the Teubner Collection, begun in 1889; Usener und Rademacher, *Dionysii Opera Rhetorica*, begun in 1899, in the Teubner Collection. Also H. van Herwerden, *Dion. Halic. Epistolæ Criticæ Tres*, Groningen, 1861; Usener, *Dionysii Halic. Librorum de Imitatione Reliquiæ Epistolaque Duæ*, Bonn, 1889; Usener, *Dion. Halic. quæ fertur Ars Rhetorica*, Leipsic, 1895; A. M. Desrousseaux et M. Egger, *Critique on Lysias*, text and French translation, Paris, 1890. *De Imitatione*, etc., with English translation, Roberts, Cambridge and London, 1901.

The fragments of Cæcilius are in Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Græc.*, sup. cit., vol. III; and are edited by Burckhardt, Basle, 1863.



*Letter to Ammæus* treat special points and are of less importance. To his full maturity belongs the treatise *On the Arrangement of Words* (Περὶ συνθέσεως ὀνομάτων), in which he studies the sentence-structure of the leading poets and prose-writers. The work abounds in interesting information; and, what is more, it has preserved, in the form of citations, a few notable passages, particularly a celebrated ode of Sappho.

His principal study on the style of oratory is his treatise on the *Power of the Style of Demosthenes*, in which he puts Demosthenes above all other prose-writers, even Thucydides and Plato. To this work were added, as supplements or justifications, the *Letter to Cn. Pompeius*, the *Character of Thucydides*, and the *Second Letter to Ammæus* on the peculiarities of the style of Thucydides. In these various writings he is quite unjust to the great historian, whose merit, nevertheless, he pretends to recognize.

Besides these works, he composed several others, now lost. The most important was a treatise in three books *On Imitation*, in which were set forth the fundamental principles of his criticism. Of the second book, there are extant a number of his judgments, some in the original form, others in abridgment. They have been reunited under the title of *Critique on the Ancient Writers*. Quintilian used them in composing the first chapter of his tenth book.

His works certainly did him honor, yet without securing him a place among great thinkers. He deserves credit chiefly because he preserved the opinions of post-Aristotelian critics. However, his influence has not been unimportant. He struggled with passionate zeal against the oratory known as Asiatic, whose principles, in short, commended bad taste and the avowed championship of ignorance. With the same zeal and the same passion, he defended the Attic orators, and the great classic poets and prose-writers whom he admired. He exercised real authority over his contemporaries, and there is every evidence that the authority was lasting. Hence it is only just to consider him as one of those who did good service to Hellenism.

His historical work is far inferior to his work as a critic. It was both a wish to pass from theory to practice and a sincere respect for Roman genius which caused him to think of becoming a historian of Rome. The account of the origins of the Roman power seemed the fittest subject for the exercise of his talent. He undertook to win honor for himself and to glorify the hospitable city that had become his favorite abode.

The *Primitive History of Rome* (Πρωταῖκή ἀρχαιολογία) formed twenty books. It extended from the foundation of the city to the First Punic

War, a period of five centuries. In this long period the author proposed to bring to the front the history of institutions and manners, together with that of wars and treaties. We have only the first eleven of the twenty books, and some fragments of the others.

Dionysius tells us that he spent more than twenty years on his great work (30–8 B.C.). In writing it, he made use of the most famous Roman annalists, Cato, Fabius Pictor, Valerius of Antium, Licinius Macer, and many others. All the historical matter of his works is taken from their writings. Herein, it must be acknowledged at once, he has incontestable documentary value; for he has preserved more fully than Livy a multitude of important facts concerning Roman traditions, as these were preserved or created little by little. From the scientific point of view, this is the sole merit of his work. Personal criticism is wholly wanting. Mythic elements, when they suited his fancy, were accorded puerile indulgence. He has no doubt that the Romans were descendants of old Greek colonists established in Latium. His accounts of manners and institutions, though clear and well written, are neither deep nor coherent. Incapable of profiting by the example of Polybius, he is exceedingly weak in political philosophy and originality, though undertaking a task for which these are indispensable. Even his chronology, based on a synchronism of the consuls of Rome and the archons of Athens, proves that either he did not see the difficulties of his task or purposely overlooked them.

These grave defects are far from being compensated by literary merit. The account, though correct, is mediocre; it is but a series of amplifications, now narrative, now oratorical, in accordance with the rules of the school. A still graver lack is that of a personal accent. There is never anything particularly animated or striking, anything that touches one or causes one to think. Throughout the long monotonous composition, everything is said in the same tone: all the characters speak in the same style; all the scenes have the same color. The reader follows with indifference the passing of events, as if the series were not connected by any unifying bond; in the long, monotonous voyage down the centuries, one has for one's guide only an honest professor of rhetoric, a simple, pious man, whose philosophy is an unquestioning belief in a Providence without purposes, chastising or recompensing from time to time, but accomplishing no end.

His reputation is based, in short, chiefly on his work as a critic. A critic, too, was his friend Cæcilius, whom we have mentioned; but the writings of Cæcilius have disappeared, and his reputation has all but perished with them. There is, however, an anonymous work,

probably of the same period, which must not be passed over in silence. It is the treatise *On the Sublime*, falsely attributed to Longinus.<sup>1</sup> This work appears, for various reasons, to belong to the first century of our era. Without being original in doctrine or method, it has a marked, sincere, literary sentiment, even ardent at times, which gives to the author's appreciations and to his style something of life and personality. It has also a liberality and generosity of spirit that reveal an honest man in the professor. The same subject had already been treated by Cæcilius. The anonymous author wished to be more practical than his predecessor, so he multiplied examples; and we owe to his practice of citing passages the existence of some fine quotations.

From all that has been said, it is right to conclude that, in the first century of the Empire, literary criticism was about to become a distinct form of composition. The movement resulted among the Romans in Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory*. Among the Greeks, it disappeared in the sophistry of the succeeding century.

**8. Poetry in the First Century.**<sup>2</sup>—Poetry could have but little place in the life of the society of the time. All the great sources of inspiration—religion, patriotism, love of the beautiful—had grown cold or tasteless. There remained scholastic tradition and polite elegance; and with these, the poets who still pretended to the name were content.

Most of them were poets only on occasion. They were ordinarily teachers of rhetoric, scholars, sometimes men of the world. They composed epigrams on mere bagatelles; all their art was exhausted in giving a pretty turn to a dozen verses. Only a few Greeks in the retinue of the patricians, *Græculi*, still laboriously wrought out poems in praise of their patrons; and the patrons were really the only ones interested. Poets and poems disappeared together.

The epigrams had at least a certain merit of grace, elegance, and spirit; and as they were short, they could be read and re-read. From time to time there was found an amateur, who collected and published the best of them. Such was the *Crown* of Meleager already mentioned; such, too, the collection of epigrams published by Philip of Thessalonica under Caligula. It would be interesting to enumerate the poets represented. The best known were Antipater of

<sup>1</sup> Editions by Weiske, Oxford, 1820; Spengel, *Rhetores Græci*, I, Leipsic, 1853 (2d ed., 1894); Jahn und Vahlen, Bonn, 1887; edition with notes and translation by Roberts, Cambridge, 1899. English translation by Havell, London and New York, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> The fragments of these poets are in Jacobs, *Anthologia*, 13 vols., Leipsic, 1794–1814; and in the editions by Dübner, 2 vols., with Latin translation, Paris, 1816, 1894–1872; and by H. Stadtmüller, Leipsic, in course of publication since 1894.

Thessalonica, Crinagoras of Mitylene, and Antiphrilos of Byzantium. None of them merits more than passing mention. Though in different degrees, they were all subservient to the method of Leonidas of Tarentum, which was Alexandrian; but their art was less polished than his, and the processes of rhetoric were more apparent.

In the other types of poetry, the only man who seems to have given proof of any capacity for invention is Philistion, a writer of mimes, who probably lived under Augustus and Tiberius. His comedies were doubtless mere droll scenes, in the course of which were enunciated a few vigorous, striking thoughts. Apparently his success was great; but we have under his name only a few isolated maxims, and even the authenticity of these is doubtful.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE HELLENIC REVIVAL

(FROM NERVA TO THE DEATH OF DIOCLETIAN)

1. General View. Causes and Character of the Hellenic Revival.
2. Development of Moral Philosophy after Domitian. Epictetus.
3. Dio Chrysostom.
4. Plutarch: his Life and Writings.
5. General Character of Plutarch's Work.
6. Plutarch as a Philosopher and Moralist.
7. Plutarch as a Historian: the *Parallel Lives*. Value of his Work as a Whole.
8. Marcus Aurelius.
9. History: Arrian and Appian.
10. Later Historical Writing. Dio Cassius. Herodian.
11. Scholars and Compilers. Pausanias. The *Library* of Apollodorus. Diogenes Laertius.
12. Sophistry: its Origin; Sketch of its History in the Second and Third Centuries.
13. Ælius Aristides and Maximus of Tyre.
14. Lucian; his Life and Writings; his Rôle and Talent.
15. His Literary Creations.
16. Alciphron; the *Philostrati*; Ælian.
17. Poetry: Oppian; Babrius.
18. The Romance.
19. Rhetoric and Grammar.
20. Philosophy and Science before Neo-Platonism: Ptolemaeus; Galen; Sextus Empiricus.
21. Neo-Platonism: Plotinus and Porphyry.
22. Rise and Expansion of Christian Literature in the Second and Third Centuries: the Apologists. The Doctors: Clement of Alexandria; Origen; Hippolytus.

**1. General View. Causes and Character of the Hellenic Revival.** — Greek genius had just passed through a period of eclipse. This, however, was of short duration. Even in the first century after Christ, under Vespasian and his sons, we see symptoms of its approaching revival. Under Nerva and Trajan the revival became more marked. It continued under Hadrian, Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, and Commodus — quite through the second century. It was a veritable renaissance. Once more we meet with men who have worth as original thinkers, moralists, and writers. It is true that at the end of the second century, the fecundity of Hellenic letters seems to wane again. Yet in the third century, Neo-Platonism was organized and proved to be the most remarkable philosophy in the Greek world after the time of Aristotle. It may be said that from the advent of Nerva to the death of Diocletian great works succeeded one another without interruption. What are the causes of the revival, and what is its character?

It was the political condition of the Roman world which made the Greek revival possible. The closing years of the Roman republic

had been a time of turmoil. The Greek kingdoms had disappeared; and the provinces succeeding them had not yet learned the customs necessary under the new régime. Till the advent of Vespasian, they were often violently rent by civil wars. Under the Flavian emperors a better era came. With Nerva and his successors, tranquillity and prosperity were reestablished and reigned continuously till the death of Commodus. The intellect could have free play once more. The schools were well attended, municipal life was organized, the provinces grew accustomed to their condition, and the relations of society were once more active and complex. Men could live in peace at home, toil, be at leisure to think, and travel with impunity. The exchange of ideas was remarkably promoted by the new organization of the world.

Greek thought, of course, tended to accommodate itself to its new conditions, and in the very nature of things became productive. The effort to secure this accommodation was really the main cause of its success. Divested, in spite of herself, of the old patriotism which had so long animated her, Greece was compelled to lay aside the purely national ideal of classic times, renounce the dainty art of Alexandria, and adapt herself more and more to humanity as a whole. Henceforth, consciously or in ignorance, this was her definitely prescribed task. Ancient culture continued, but became more universal and liberal. In philosophy, in literature, men professed their allegiance to the renowned masters of old; but the old ideals were adopted only in so far as they were applicable to the new order of things; and many elements of diverse origin were incorporated with them. Hence originality was possible, notwithstanding the imitation; and hence the distinguished men of the time were different from their immediate predecessors. The latter had done little but compile, select, comment, and adapt what they found; these refashioned what they seemed to borrow.

To give to the account of such complex facts all the order that is possible, we shall commence by studying the development of philosophy with Epictetus, Dio, Plutarch, and Marcus Aurelius, as it is in and through them that the revival of the second century first appears with brilliance; then we shall pass to the historians and scholars, who, in certain ways, resemble them; and in the middle of the chapter we shall speak of sophistry, which filled the century with the noise of its success. To the sophists proper, Herodes Atticus, Ælius Aristides, and Maximus of Tyre, we shall join Lucian, their adversary and their pupil; then Alciphron, Ælian, and the Philostrati, who continued their work from the reign of Commodus to the end of the third century; and then, all who had to do with

sophistry, that is, with poetry and romance on the one hand, and with rhetoric and grammar on the other. We shall return eventually to history and philosophy, and finish tracing their evolution: to history, to speak of Dio Cassius and Herodian; and to philosophy, to show, in Neo-Platonism, the organization of a theology which aimed to renew and enlarge the scope of Hellenic thought. The chapter will conclude with a summary account of the rise and expansion of Christian literature, which in the century succeeding was to absorb almost the whole vitality of Hellenism.

## 2. Development of Moral Philosophy after Domitian. *Epictetus*.<sup>1</sup>—

We have seen that for several centuries philosophy was occupied in a way with morals. The philosophers of the Alexandrian period had treated it as a system of doctrine. Those of the first century of the Empire, inheriting the dogmas of their predecessors, had scarcely more than shown its applications. They had become less and less theorists and more and more preachers and directors of conscience. In a general way this is also the part of the philosophers of whom we are now to speak. Yet they gave proof of originality in their own way, because they no longer addressed themselves to a narrow circle, but spoke to all the world.

The first of these great moralists, Epictetus, wrote nothing. His discourse, however, was strong, sincere, and spontaneous, and continued to live in the mere notes of his disciple. Here it shows, in somewhat stern brilliance, one of the most striking forms that human energy ever assumed.

Epictetus was born about 50 A.D., or perhaps a little earlier, at Hieropolis in Phrygia, and was taken to Rome as a slave. As such he lived there in the time of Nero. Epaphroditus, his master, had him educated by the Stoic noble Musonius Rufus, whom we have already named. He grew enthusiastic over the instruction of Musonius, which became the object of a passionate faith on his part, the very formula of his life. Liberated at some unknown date, he still lived at Rome under Vespasian and Titus, and for a time under Domitian. When the latter expelled the philosophers from Italy (94 A.D.), Epictetus retired to Nicopolis in Epirus. There he lived,

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Schweighäuser, *Epictetæ Philosophiæ Monumenta*, 5 vols., Leipsic, 1799–1800; Dübner, *Epicteti Dissertationes, Fragmenta, et Enchiridion, cum Commentario Simplicii*, with a Latin translation, in the volume with the *Characters* of Theophrastus, Paris, Didot, 1848; Schenkl, *Epicteti Dissertationes, accedunt Fragmenta, Enchiridion, Gnomologiorum Epictetorum Reliquiæ*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1894.

English translations by Higginson, 2 vols., Boston, 1890; and Long, 2 vols., London, 1891. The *Manual* is translated by Rolleston, London, 1888.

Consult: Martha, *Les Moralistes sous l'Empire romain*, 5th ed., Paris, 1886; Schenkl, the prolegomena of his edition. Farrar, *Seekers After God*, often republished.

under Nerva and Trajan, and in the early years of Hadrian's reign until about 125. He led a life of poverty and had no family, yet he was not isolated. Numerous disciples surrounded him; travellers paused to visit him; his reputation spread far and wide and brought him admirers and disciples. Among these, in the last years of Trajan's reign, was probably the young Bithynian, Arrian of Nicomedia, the future historian. Charmed with the instruction of his master, he reduced it to writing, and so made it possible for us to read what the philosopher thought. There were two collections, the *Conversations* (*Διατριβαί*) and the *Manual* (*Ἐγχειρίδιον*).

The *Conversations*, of which we have approximately half, was composed in four books from notes taken from day to day. Arrian reproduced, not the lessons simply, but the familiar conversations on subjects concerning morals which Epictetus held in his presence, whether with other disciples or with visitors. The book was written without revision; it is the faithful reproduction of what Arrian heard, the living voice, caught and noted down in its primal originality. Later, seeing how profitable the moral lessons were to many persons, Arrian tried to put the essential matters which they contained into a small volume, which he called the *Manual*. This has been transmitted to us. In every way it was to be a practical work; and every one was to find in it the necessary help in need, the salutary warning in time of trial, and the consolation that brings comfort in sorrow.

Epictetus was original, not in his doctrine, as he taught only traditional Stoicism, but in the personal sentiment that breathed in his lessons. Though a slave, he sought in Stoic morals the enfranchisement of his soul. In youth he had conceived the idea of moral liberty, and when grown he pursued it with passionate ardor. According to the Stoic morals and psychology which he adopted, the human will is independent of everything but itself; nothing can constrain it. If man submits to servitude in morals, it is because he consents to do so. He is the slave of his desires and fears, if he concerns himself about what is valueless, or what he has no power to alter. He who desires only moral good and fears only moral evil is absolutely free. All morals is an education of the mind bringing it to accept this liberating truth. That is what Epictetus proclaimed constantly and with absolute faith. Tenacious and ingenuous, impelled always in one direction by incomparable moral energy, he was a man of one idea whom nothing embarrassed or caused to swerve.

The great business of philosophy, he contended, is not to establish these principles, which to him seemed self-evident, but to cause them to be influential in all our acts and sentiments. Under every



circumstance, particularly the unforeseen one, they are to be applied, and that so promptly that even brusque impression, sudden desire, instinctive fear—in a word, every rapid impulse that carries away the soul before it is put on its guard—may be resisted. In outlining this philosophy he employed all the resources of his powerful mind: active, convincing dialectic, clear insight, pungent sarcasm, bold and familiar irony, and an imagination capable of suggesting always the most appropriate metaphor.

Perhaps his chief weakness lay in the very strength and charm of his personality. However noble his intentions or lofty his ideal, he is too positive. One would fain see in his teaching more reserve, more hesitation, more sympathy with human weakness. His harshness grows embarrassing. As a devotee of impersonal reason, he treats with violence the man whom he would heal. He denies him the affections of home, the charm of friendship, the pleasure of study, delight in beauty, and all that, for the majority of men, can make life worth living. A philosophy so opposed to natural sentiment may win one's admiration but can scarcely gain one's love.

Yet there is evident the tendency to universalize already noted. He addresses himself to man as man, demanding no special initiation, attaching himself to the doctrines of no city and to no religious cult, but appealing solely to reason. Hence the *Manual* is one of those rare books that belong to all time and every country. As the inspiring spirit of the system, he continued to be ever a source of moral potency and lofty inspiration, because he introduced so much of truth into his brief formulas and striking pictures.

**3. Dio Chrysostom.**<sup>1</sup>—The moral doctrine of Epictetus is almost the same as that found in his contemporary, the orator and philosopher Dio, surnamed by his auditors Chrysostom (Gold-mouth). But while it appeared at Nicopolis in a form austere even to severity, it was clothed in the discourse of Dio with a joyous grace which made it infinitely more attractive.

Born about 40 A.D. at Prusa, in Bithynia, Dio belonged to one of the foremost families of his native city. In youth he felt the charm of oratory and devoted himself to it. It was the time, as we shall soon see, when rhetoric, in its new form, was having a continually increasing success. Between the ages of thirty and forty, under the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, Dio seems to have become a famous lecturer. He met with applause from the Orient and the Occident

<sup>1</sup> L. Dindorf, *Dionis Chrysostomi Orationes*, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1857; Hans von Arnim, *Dionis Prusensis quæ estant Oratio*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1893-1896.

Consult: Martha, *Les Moralistes*, *sup. cit.*; H. von Arnim, *Leben und Werke des Dio von Prusa*, Berlin, 1898.

—in Greece, Egypt, and Rome. Even imperial favor does not seem to have passed him by; but an unforeseen incident brusquely brought this to an end. In 82, implicated by Domitian in the disgrace of Flavius Sabinus, he received an interdiction forbidding him to live in either Italy or Bithynia. In exile, under suspicion, half-ruined, he saw all his hopes vanish. His ill fortune continued fourteen years. Far from becoming weak, however, he fortified his heart by means of his very misfortune. Assuming the part of a poor wanderer, he strolled through Greece among the common people, re-reading, for his consolation, according to Philostratus, two books he had brought with him, Plato's *Phædo* and the oration of Demosthenes *On the Embassy*. Forced to reflection and the consolation of his sorrow, he turned to philosophy. The period of trouble came to an end in 96, with the advent of Nerva, who was his friend. He returned to Prusa. The change of fortune was not to bring with it a change of moral disposition. His last years were employed chiefly in travels, which might almost be called "missions." Like the sophists, he went from city to city; but instead of treating frivolous subjects as they did, he devoted himself to serious moral preaching. He spoke thus at Apamea, Tarsus, Alexandria, and many other places. He even came to Rome, where several times he addressed Trajan, who held him in high esteem. He probably died toward the close of that prince's reign. His wife and his son had already passed away.

He wrote extensively. Some of his works have disappeared, notably his *Letters* and a *History of the Getæ* (Γερικὰ), which he wrote during his exile. But his reputation was won by his discourses. They were collected, and a considerable number of them have been preserved. Our collection, though much confused, comprises some whole discourses and some fragments. Three well-marked groups can be distinguished: the sophistic, the political, and the moral. The first belong to the early part of his life, and are like the frivolous, glossy eloquence then fashionable. They are the least interesting of all. The political discourses belong, in general, to his maturity and are mostly later than his exile. They pertain to the affairs of Bithynia, to discords among the inhabitants of Prusa, or the conflicting interests between that city and Nicæa or Nicomedia. They are very interesting as documents concerning the history of Greek Asia under Roman dominion. The moral discourses are connected with his formal preaching. They all come from the last period of his life, and are the most important and beautiful in the collection. Only in them does his real originality appear.

His real function was that of popularizing, or trying to popularize, the moral doctrines of philosophy. His ideas are obtained from the

syncretism of the times — mostly Stoic, yet influenced by the Academy, the Lyceum, and the teaching of the Pythagoreans. His theology tends to be Platonic, yet not ostensibly so. It has elements obtained from Pythagoreanism and from popular mythology. Really he is not so much a philosopher as an eloquent interpreter of philosophy, which is very different. In the schools he found certain great moral and religious truths, which seemed ignored or misunderstood by the multitude; and he applied himself to explaining them — or rather making the application of them to particular cases among his auditors. He strove to deduce from theories reserved for specialists what seemed necessary for all men. His was a work of wide popularization, aiming to spread abroad the best parts of Hellenic wisdom. This is the essence of the *Discourses* to the Alexandrians, to the citizens of Tarsus, to those of Celænæ, to the Cilicians, of his *Olympiaca*, his *Borysthenitica*, his discourse to Trajan *On Royalty*, and, in brief, of all his most celebrated oratorical compositions. Even his *Euboica*, which starts like a rustic story, a pastoral idyll in prose, is in fact an exhortation to toil, simplicity of manners, and fraternal harmony. Never had so earnest an attempt been made to bring as many men as possible to the understanding and possession of a salutary ideal.

His mission needed faith, courage, enthusiasm, and a peculiar talent such as he possessed. His manner was that of contemporary sophists; like them, he spoke in lecture-rooms, sometimes in theatres, but with extraordinary boldness and frankness. His great popularity assured him an attentive audience; and his misfortunes, so nobly borne, won the sympathy of the public. Under Trajan, he was well known, even at court. Yet all this would probably have failed to establish his reputation, had he not added the piquant charm of his spirit. His oratory is a strange mixture of gracious fancy, brilliant and ingenious invention, keen word play, witty raillery, and high moral inspiration. He imitates Socrates in concealing his wisdom beneath a superficial irony, amusing his public by sallies of wit, charming it with homely comparisons, and then suddenly, changing tone, surprising and captivating it with grave meditations. No doubt there was in his oratory something of the sophistic manner of his contemporaries. His style was dainty, his thought much occupied with matters of trifling value: but, with all his defects, he had a clever charm that is manifest even in our day. Among the writers of the time, he is certainly one of the most amiable.

**4. Plutarch: his Life and Writings.**<sup>1</sup> — Neither of the two men

<sup>1</sup> Dölner und Dübner, *Plutarchi Vitæ and Plutarchi Moralia*, 5 vols., with the fragments and a Latin translation, Paris, Didot, 1846–1855; Sintenis und

whom we have mentioned could equal Plutarch in the work of enlarging Hellenism which we are considering. Epictetus was too subservient to a fixed idea and Dio too much occupied with things of the day, to make their reputations either permanent or universal. But Plutarch was not only one of the most illustrious men of his generation, but one who, among the ancient writers, is to-day best liked and most influential. He was always being cited by Hellenic authorities; and his good fortune was due, not to happy chance, but to the possession of qualities which put him at once among men of genius.

He was born at Chæronea in Bœotia, a little before 50 A.D., and belonged to an ancient family of pure Hellenic descent, which owned considerable property there. It was an old family on an old domain. The home abounded in traditions. The family was strong and intelligent, with the simple manners of the middle class, religious and patriotic, yet not adverse to the ideas of the day. His infancy was passed partly with his grandfather, Lamprias, a clever old man and a story-teller; and partly with his father, Nicarchus, who was upright and sensible, and two brothers, Lamprias and Timon. Afterward he spent some years at Athens, studying rhetoric, science, and philosophy. His favorite teacher seems to have been the Platonist Ammonius. When grown, he travelled, sometimes on business, sometimes for the pleasure of seeing the world. He visited Greece, Egypt, and Italy, living at Rome in the reign of Vespasian. As was customary, he gave lectures on philosophy there. He soon returned to Chæronea, and that was afterward his home. When he had attained fame, it seemed to him, he says, that "being born in a small city, he would make it smaller still if he went away." He loved his native place, and grew old there in peace, surrounded by his family, his books, and the numbers of friends who came to visit him. Sometimes he went to Athens, often to Delphi—whither his priestly functions carried him—and also to the baths of Thermopylæ or of Ædepsos in Eubœa. No one had a greater liking for society than he; all the time that he did not pass in reading or writing was spent, if possible,

Bernardakis, *Vite Parallelæ*, and *Moralia*, 11 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1852-1895; Bekker, Leipsic, Tauchnitz, 1855-1857; *De Musica*, with French translation and notes, by Weil and Reinach, Paris, Leroux, 1900; *Moralia*, by Wyttenbach, 15 vols., Oxford, 1795-1830.

English translation of the *Parallel Lives* by Clough, London, 1876; of the *Moralia* by Goodwin, Boston, 1870; of the *Themistocles* and *Aristides*, with introduction and notes, by B. Perrin, New York, Scribners, 1901.

Consult: the excursus in Wyttenbach's edition; R. Volkmann, *Leben, Schriften, und Philosophie des Plutarch von Chæronea*, Berlin, 1873; Gérard, *De la Morale de Plutarque*, Paris, 1866; Ch. Lévêque, *Un Médecin de l'Âme chez les Grecs (Rév. des Deux-Mondes, 1867)*; Michaelis, *De Ordine Vitarum Parallelarum Plutarchi*, Berlin, 1875.



in conversation. His *Table Talk* is made up of notes of his daily conversation. He took such notes throughout his life. Voluntarily holding aloof from politics, he accepted, in the way of public honors, only the modest offices of *agoranomos* and *archon eponymus* of Chæronea. Trajan and Hadrian seem to have shown him particular marks of esteem, but our information here is not precise. He died in Hadrian's reign, probably about 125.

Our collection of his writings seems to have been formed in the tenth century, when his work had already suffered heavy loss. It was established from manuscripts containing many lacunæ; and the editor who formed it readily accepted non-authentic works. Hence arises a series of critical questions, many of which are far from being solved. We shall not touch upon them here. All that we can attempt to do is to show from some of the chief works, whose authenticity is certain, what are his characteristic traits.

His works are commonly divided into two groups of almost equal importance: the *Parallel Lives* and the collection called, very improperly, the *Morals* (*Ἠθικά*, *moralia*.) Really the second group is miscellaneous, and many of the works in it have no connection at all with morals.

**5. General Characteristics of Plutarch's Work.** — He was a writer on many subjects. He wrote constantly and about everything. This hindered him from writing any one great work. Extensive and varied scholarship was the source of his immense literary production. No one heard, read, learned, or retained more. History, archæology, philosophy, natural and mathematical sciences, medicine, music, grammar, literature, every domain of contemporary knowledge he seems to have explored. Throughout his life he took notice of everything. Owing evidently to an admirable memory, his observations were in readiness whenever he needed them. To erudition, he added the gift of keen perception. With his attentive, alert mind, he watched constantly, and knew the art of seeing accurately; what he had seen, he retained. He collected an incredible store of facts, anecdotes, and remarks which, increasing day by day, permitted him to speak and write on every subject, in an interesting and precise manner.

His facility, it is true, had its inconveniences. It made it seem needless to do intense thinking. He was not the man to pour out indiscriminately in writing or conversation a mass of facts, without putting anything of his own into them; on the contrary, his active, meditative mind, his untiring, independent, sincere spirit, loved to think, and thought on every subject. He had enough force of reason to be able to arrange methodically his materials and adapt

them to the schemes he had conceived. Nothing would be more unjust than to regard him as a mere compiler, or even an arranger lacking originality. In all that he wrote something of his own personality is present and enhances its value. Everywhere one sees the honest man, the man of ready penetration and fine sympathies, the observer, the graceful story-teller, and, more generally, the Greek possessed of his own opinions, clear-sighted, and keen in his sense of the good and the beautiful. What he lacked was the faculty or habit of continuous meditation on one subject. He had so many resources close at hand that he did not care to seek the others. Educated chiefly by conversation, he wrote with the same ready facility that he would use in talking, without pausing to go to the depth of things.

Most of his writings are dissertations, almost lectures. There is an easily comprehended general idea, quickly indicated, a few simple main divisions, and in each a varied, amusing, instructive exposition, in which anecdotes are mingled with reflections. All this forms a brilliant, many-colored fabric, that attracts the eye. Yet his art, on close examination, is superficial; his leading thought is often feeble, and even commonplace.

Like Plato, he composed *Dialogues*, of which we have fifteen. The best are those in which he introduces himself either under his own or a fictitious name, with his brothers, his friends, and real or imaginary persons in contemporary society. Some dialogues are represented as taking place at Delphi; and though he does not fully turn to profit the resources of art which that setting offered, there is a natural harmony between the associations of the place and the sentiments expressed, which gives the latter enhanced value. His character-painting, though without much relief, is not by any means weak. In short, his works possess a moderate degree of art, without being works of art in the strict sense. Too much dissertation is incorporated with the dialogue; and it has the merits and defects which we have just noticed as characteristic of the man himself.

The biography exemplified in his *Parallel Lives* is marked by similar defects. We shall consider these more closely in dealing with his work as a historian. We shall need also, however, to commend him for having introduced something uniquely characteristic of himself, something that he may almost be said to have appropriated.

His style is far from classic. Brought up in the schools of philosophy, his language was indifferent, abounding in abstract terms, new words, and commonplace or obscure expressions. Even his taste is not always pure. Fine writing and affectation are sometimes found. It was the tone and language of the society in which

he lived, and he could not rid himself of it altogether; by nature he tended to simplicity. Though not a great writer, he wrote well. He repudiated the scruples of contemporary purists, yet did not sanction negligence. His native qualities, ingenuity, good grace, delicacy, and wit are apparent in his expression just as in his thought.

**6. Plutarch as a Philosopher and Moralist.** — By profession, he considered himself a philosopher; and, indeed, philosophy is the principal element of his work. But it is philosophy in the broad, ancient sense of the word, including not only theology, logic, morals, and psychology, but also mathematics and natural sciences, and in general the knowledge and the desire to know all that could be known about God, man, and the universe.

As a disciple of the Platonist Ammonius, he considered Plato as his master. He had studied his teaching from youth up, regarding it as the best, and continuing to regard it thus till the end of his life. His treatise *On the Psychology of the Timæus*, his *Platonic Questions*, and many passages of his other writings show that he had the works of the great philosopher beside him constantly, meditated upon them, and tried to interpret them and elucidate their difficulties. He was not ignorant of the rival doctrines, but rejected them. He wrote, against the Stoics, several dissertations sometimes resembling dialogues; notably *On the Stoic Contradictions* and *On the Stoic Paradoxes*. Against the Epicureans, he waged a still fiercer war, as in the *Refutation of Colotes*, the dialogue *On the Impossibility of Living happily by following Epicurus*, and the few pages against the maxim that "one must hide one's personality." These are profound and well-pondered differences of opinion. Plutarch was a Platonist with all his heart — not from meditation only, but also from natural tendency and unalterable inclination; for Platonism, with its lofty spirituality, its passionate love of the good and the beautiful, its deeply religious spirit, was, as it were, the necessary form of his thinking and sentiment. Yet Plutarch's Platonism is no mere reproduction of what Plato taught. Like all his contemporaries, whether intentionally or not, he associated with Plato's system ideas obtained from various sources. He even borrowed from the Stoics, and sometimes from the Epicureans, whom he opposed; but above all from Aristotle and the Peripatetics, whom he was wont to pass by in silence, or from the Pythagoreans, whom he admired without formally accepting them as masters. This is no place for analyzing his philosophy. He is generally and properly considered one of the forerunners of Neo-Platonism, already having its profound tendency to eclecticism in theology and its belief in a divine hierarchy, a whole series of beings intermediate between God

and man. In his treatises, *On the Ei at Delphi*, *On the Oracles of the Pythia*, *On the Cessation of Oracles*, *On the Delays of Divine Vengeance*, and *On Isis and Osiris*, he shows himself not merely a defender of the idea of God and of faith in His intervention in human affairs, but also of theories really original, at least in their importance, concerning demons or geniuses, whom men have been duped to adore as gods, but whom philosophy distinguishes with care from the true God, the Infallible and Immutable. With a similar conception, he explains or justifies the various forms of polytheism, excuses its errors, and deduces from the vulgar or even contradictory systems of mythology the concept of a universal God, of whom human intelligence has glimpses, without comprehending Him in full.

For most modern readers, the best part of his philosophy is not his theology so much as his morals. No one has written more on moral subjects. A moralist by instinct, he was one always and everywhere, in every sense of the word. His doctrine is liberal: he is equally opposed to asceticism and to looseness of life; what he loves and recommends is a just mean. He would stifle no human sentiment whatever. He does not inveigh against friendship, love, domestic and political affiliations, nor delicate pleasures, but intends that man shall be always self-controlled, and obedient to reason (*On Moral Virtue*, *That Virtue can be Taught*, *On Virtue and Vice*). He stops but little over generalities. What interests him most is the application of principles to daily life; and therein he excels.

Many of his writings show him to be, as some one has said, a veritable "physician of the soul," pointing out the faults of those who consult him, indicating remedies, multiplying warnings, encouraging the feeble, consoling the unhappy, and putting peace into troubled hearts (*On Restraint of Anger*, *On Prattling*, *On Indiscretion*, *On False Shame*, *On Envy*, *On the Desire for Riches*, *On Praising Oneself without offending Others*, *On Progress in Virtue*, *On Peace of Soul*, *On Exile*, *The Consolation to his Wife*). In some of these, addressing friends conscious of their defects and wishing to overcome them, he institutes, with a remarkable combination of practical sense and ingenious originality, a methodical course of treatment, in which nothing is left to chance. Elsewhere, for those whom unforeseen calamity has visited, he expresses his own personal sentiments in place of the trite consolations of the schools. But really high merit is wanting here as elsewhere. He does not have the depth of a great moralist, the boldness of a genius in satire, nor the eloquence of him who lifts the human soul to heaven. Yet subtlety, goodness, amiable and piquant grace, with abundance of allusions, a gift for story-telling, and sincere zeal which nothing can discourage—these he has. As



a counsellor, he encourages all the sentiments that promote the domestic and social interests; for his moral teaching looks always to the development of social life. His *Precepts on Marriage*, his writings *On Brotherly Love*, *On Many Friends*, *On Distinguishing Friendship from Flattery*, his *Political Precepts*, and the treatise *On whether an Old Man should retire from Public Life*, form together a practical course on domestic and social morals, in which active moderation is still extolled. He sees, indeed, difficulties and dangers in all sorts of things; but far from concluding that they should be avoided from fear or chagrin, he encourages man to mingle in the affairs of his fellows. His work on *How the Young should read the Poets* is that of a prudent educator, who is unwilling to sacrifice to unfounded scruples the profit which a perusal of the great works of poetic genius confers.

**7. Plutarch as a Historian: the *Parallel Lives*. Value of his Work as a Whole.** — However renowned he has been and still is as a moralist, his greatest popularity is based on his historical works; and among these there is only one of moment, the collection of *Parallel Lives*. No book of antiquity is better known; and though it was not a work of genius, there is scarcely any other that merits being read more often.

He did not create biography. He found it already honored and sanctioned by long tradition. In writing the *Parallel Lives* he had no thought of doing anything new. But, in a rather vaguely defined type, he constituted, by his manner of writing, a particular form that was his own. This we must try to define and appreciate.

We still have fifty of the biographies that he composed; and we know that he wrote others. Forty-six are in pairs, and form the collection of *Parallel Lives*; the other four, those of Aratus, Artaxerxes, Otho, and Galba, are isolated. In general, the lives seem to have been composed without much interruption from the time of his full maturity to that of his extreme old age. They belong to the same period as most of the moral works, and show the same tendencies in matters of belief. The establishment of a chronological order of composition among them is a task which modern criticism has attempted, but with very incomplete success.

A moral purpose manifestly predominates in them all over the purely historical one: "History," he says, "was for me almost a mirror, before which I tried to beautify my life by making it conform to the examples of great men" (*Timoleon*, the beginning). To propose examples for his own imitation and for the imitation of others, to seek useful lessons in the history of particular men active on the stage of the world's activity, to find matter for reflection and

for the solution of the difficulties of life, — in brief, to learn to live well: this is his principal object. History, thus conceived, does not have its end in itself; it is a mere instrument in the service of morals. This is an essential fact, which must not be lost sight of in appreciating the work; yet it must not be so heavily stressed that it obscures the historical value. In reality, though the general design was that of a moralist, the fondness for curiosities and pretty stories was too powerful not to be satisfied, — and that more generously than his plan, if rigorously followed, would have allowed.

The idea of proceeding in history by continued comparisons between men of different races was not original with him; but he applied it with a systematic persistence which shows that it gave him pleasure. There was in it something of national pride on his part: to every great Roman, it was very easy, at a time when Greece was no longer more than a province of the Empire, to oppose one of the great men she had produced when she was free. Then the parallelism served his moral purpose. Each pair originally ended with a comparison (*Σύγκρισις*), which gave the philosopher occasion to formulate his judgments, and to deduce, one may say, the moral of his stories. The inconvenience of proceeding thus might have been grave from another point of view, if the pursuit of the parallelism had induced him to modify insensibly the true features of his personages for the sake of establishing between them resemblances or contrasts imaginary rather than real. But this was rarely true. It happened often, no doubt, that he arbitrarily put side by side personages whom nothing seemed really to group together; but almost never did the intention of comparing them distort the exposition of facts. All one can say is that the singularly fragile frame became gradually disjointed; and that his readers acquired more and more the habit of considering each biography by itself.

The parallelism rejected, if the works are arranged in the order of time, there is before one's eyes an immense gallery of portraits, embracing almost completely the history of Rome from its foundation to the end of the republic and that of Greece from legendary times to the last struggles for national independence. By its variety and the importance of the personages introduced it is of extreme interest. But one must understand that for Plutarch, biography, even aside from the moral purpose mentioned above, was more than a mere phase of history. It had its original character and its peculiar conditions, of which it was clearly conscious. "What I have chiefly endeavored to bring together," he says at the beginning of his *Life of Nicias*, "is the traits that are commonly overlooked, whether these have been noticed here and there by other historians, or have been

found attested by monuments and ancient decrees. Not wishing to amass facts that have no meaning, I have selected what is appropriate for revealing the character and disposition of the man." This is the formula of his method. In the history of a period, he centred his interest upon a man; and in this man, what interested him most was "the character and disposition." His public life, his great deeds are far from being disdained; but he studied them chiefly as revealing the will, the sentiments, the character; and if he met here and there in the historians facts obscure and insignificant in appearance, which history proper scarcely noted in passing, but which seemed fit to illustrate the object he had in view, he devoted himself to displaying the remote corners of the moral nature, and did not shrink from bringing these into relief; for this was precisely his intention.

His research was conducted with praiseworthy zeal and absolute sincerity. The *Lives* were the product of extensive reading and conscientious inquiry. From a scientific point of view, one may censure them for their utter disregard of chronology and for the want of criticism that is everywhere perceptible. For he cannot always appreciate the unequal value of evidences. He confides too readily in those that furnish him anecdotes, even suspicious ones, or in those that charm him with pretty stories. That said, however, it must be admitted that the *Parallel Lives* atone for these defects by many merits. They put before us illustrious personages, with their good qualities and their faults, their grandeur and their pettiness. We see them live, are present in their acts, and have our part in their sentiments. We are taught, affected, and amused. They afford keen pleasure to any one who is interested in human affairs. History, thus associated with a few men, certainly becomes more accessible to such minds as can grasp easily only what is individual and concrete. The characteristics of the narrative are well adapted to its purpose. Plutarch is an excellent story-teller—a narrator in the best sense of the word. He puts into trifling matters wit, grace, and an apparent candor, which makes them charming. When treating things of more importance, he displays certain superior qualities without effort. His great historic pictures win fresh admiration each time that one re-reads them. He has a childlike imagination, fond of great spectacles, sensitive to striking traits of character, to beauty, magnanimity, and harshness. His heart is easily touched, very human and sensitive, notwithstanding his philosophic gravity. He has natural sympathy, which makes him one of the best interpreters of the tragedies of history. His accounts are filled, if not with finished dramas, at least with dramatic scenes, now familiar, now terrible, and singularly true. The great authors of tragedy,

notably Corneille and Shakespeare, made liberal use of his themes and often followed him closely, or even deigned to translate his language.

These good qualities assured a legitimate popularity for the *Lives*. It is one of the works which contributed most to the propagation of Hellenic influence, because it is one of those that most enlarged Hellenism. The "great men of Plutarch," though provoking a smile because, as he conceived them, they have a confidence in their goodness which seems naïve to unprejudiced minds, are really noble types of humanity. They represent patriotism, courage, unselfishness, loyalty—all lofty public and private virtues, under a form so dignified and pure that it no longer seems exclusively Greek or Roman, but universal. The work which portrays them is doubtless one of those which have formed and still form the education of the noblest elements of the human race.

Accordingly we reach a definite conclusion respecting Plutarch. Being thoroughly permeated with the civilization of his country, versed in its history, philosophy, literature, and religion, he served it as a witness and interpreter before posterity. But he had a heart large enough and a mind liberal enough to understand the great and beautiful in the world outside; and so, though not a man of genius, he attained a place in the foremost rank of those who developed the civilization which it has been ours to inherit.

**8. Marcus Aurelius.**<sup>1</sup>—The natural order of things brings us to place beside this man of Hellenic descent a Roman, yet one profoundly Hellenized, the emperor Marcus Aurelius. The other philosophers of the time whose names might be cited, even Favorinus of Arelate, do not come within the range of literary history. This prince alone, writing for himself and about himself, with no ambition to be an author, merits our attention.

His life is part of history in general. He was born at Rome in 121. At the age of seventeen, in 138, he was adopted by Antoninus on the suggestion of Hadrian; the same year, on the accession of his adopted father to the throne, he became heir apparent of the imperial power. After the death of Antoninus, in 161, he reigned nineteen years, till 180. Educated by the best masters of the time in rhetoric and philosophy, he devoted himself by preference to the

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Dübner, *Marci Antonini Commentarii*, Paris, 1840, with Latin translation, in the volume containing the *Characters* of Theophrastus; Stich, *Marci Antonini Commentarii*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1882.

Consult: Martha, *Moralistes*, etc., *sup. cit.*; Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, essay in the front of his *Pensées*; Paul B. Watson, *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, New York, 1884.

English translations by Collier, London, 1887; Long, Boston, 1863; and Rendall, London and New York, 1898.



latter study. We have some *Letters* of his in Latin and a collection of *Thoughts*, or personal reflections (*Tà eis éautón*), in Greek. Though a work of small extent, the latter gave him his reputation.

It is the utterance of a melancholy, though courageous, nature, often chilled by the coldness of life, yet firmly attached to an unswerving optimism. Its teaching is thoroughly Stoic. His Stoicism, like that of Epictetus, was a profound, even an ardent, faith, and penetrated his soul to its remotest depths. Never was any man's belief stronger in the doctrine he taught nor the effort of any more sincere, more constant, more zealous to bring his life into conformity with his belief.

The small volume, at present divided into twelve books, seems to have been written by the emperor from day to day, in the last years of his life, approximately between 166 and 174. Though much troubled by cares and sadness and occupied with difficulties and annoyances of many sorts at Rome, beyond the Danube, or even outside the Empire, the noble prince loved to meditate, to interrogate himself, and to examine carefully his conscience. The pages which he thus wrote in solitude form a long, though broken, meditation on duty, human affection, and the conditions of life. Every word discloses a simple, good man, thankful for all the kindnesses that have been done him, a stranger to vanity and rancor, indulgent to others, severe with himself, truly confident in the wise ordering of the world, the Stoic Providence. As the history of a soul, his work is dramatic; as a document concerning one of the great philosophers of antiquity, it is a prize; as a suggestion for thought and moral force, its value is of the first order. In form, it consists of simple notes, scarcely revised; but they have their value, even from a literary point of view. Emotion and sincerity are evident throughout; and often energetic conciseness, a vivid touch or figure, sometimes a certain grandeur, no doubt in the idea rather than in the style, is manifest, communicating itself to the style, and vivifying it.

**9. History: Arrian and Appian.<sup>1</sup>** — Later in the chapter we shall come upon philosophy again in connection with Neo-Platonism. Let us lay it aside, however, for a moment, as it is in the writing of history that we can best continue now to study the revival of the sec-

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Arrian, by Dübner, *Arriani Anabasis et Indica*; C. Müller, *Reliquiæ Arriani*, both in one volume, with Latin translation, Paris, Didot, 1846-1868; Sintenis, *Arriani Anabasis*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1879; Hercher, *Arriani Scripta Minora*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1854.

The Didot Collection, *Appiani Alexandrini quæ supersunt*, with Latin translation, Paris, 1840; Mendelssohn, *Appiani Historiæ*, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1879-1881. H. White, London and New York, 1899.

Consult: Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopædia*, s.v. *Appianus* and *Arrianus*; D. Ross, *Quid Xenophonti debeuerit Arrianus*, Paris, 1882.

ond century. The period did not produce many great historians; neither Arrian nor Appian can be considered such, for neither produced anything really new in this old form of composition. Yet in a secondary rank they are certainly superior to their immediate predecessors, Diodorus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in their comprehension of politics, their knowledge of practical affairs, and their understanding of historical values. As writers, though endowed with different qualities, both held honorable places among those whose merit is chiefly that of respect for good stylistic traditions.

Arrian was a Greek of Nicomedia in Bithynia. Sprung from a provincial family of considerable means, he devoted his mind seriously to various studies. His nature was docile, sincere, courageous, and without marked originality. In his youth he was a pupil of Epictetus, whom he admired profoundly. In collecting the works of Epictetus, he edited the two books which have perpetuated that philosopher's teachings. But his vocation was something different. He served in the imperial armies and gradually attained distinction. In various capacities he visited parts of the Empire (probably the Danubian Provinces, with Gaul and Numidia), and was noticed and favored by Hadrian. After being consul in 130, he had to administer as proconsul the province of Cappadocia. He performed these functions with sagacity and vigor, winning the respect of the barbarian Alani. After this, for some reason, he lived in retirement under the reign of Antoninus, and died at an advanced age, under Marcus Aurelius. In the last part of his life, though not abandoning Nicomedia, he seems to have made long visits to Athens, and the city gave him the right of citizenship. Fond of culture, letters, and physical exercises, at once a philosopher, historian, and military man, he took Xenophon as his model and was pleased when men noticed the fact. He was called at Athens the New Xenophon. He wrote most of his historical works after he had retired from private life.

In editing the *Conversations* and the *Manual* of Epictetus, he limited himself voluntarily to the modest office of a scribe, simply noting, as faithfully as possible, his master's words. His originality, on the whole, was never marked, and was developed but gradually. The *Voyage in the Euxine*, written for Hadrian about 131, is scarcely more than an official report, translated into Greek and slightly modified for publication. In his *Treatise on Tactics*, composed in 137, he adapts the earlier tacticians to his purpose, notably a certain Aelian, who immediately preceded him, the author of a *Theory of Tactics* which we still possess. The *Plan of Battle against the Alani* is a fragment of uncertain origin which must date from the same time. These were essays. If we put aside two lost biographies (*Timoleon*

of *Corinth* and *Dio of Syracuse*), we shall come to the works that established his reputation, the *Expedition of Alexander* ('Αλεξάνδρον Ἀνάβασις), supplemented by a work *On India* (Ἰνδική, sc. συγγραφή), another *On the Period after Alexander* (Τὰ μετ' Ἀλέξανδρον), and a *History of Bithynia* (Βιθυνιακά); the last two are lost. Then he composed a work *On the Alani* ('Αλανικά), likewise lost, and a *History of the War against the Parthians under Trajan* (Παρθική), in seventeen books, perhaps his most original work, none of which, however, has been transmitted to us. We do have, on the contrary, a small treatise *On Hunting* (Κυνηγετικός), of uncertain date; but this it is enough simply to mention.

The only work of his still classic is the *Expedition of Alexander*. His attention seems to have been drawn to the subject by the expedition of Trajan against the Parthians, one of the most important events of his youth. In the second century the old, authentic accounts of this expedition had been forgotten, or were unpopular, and the legendary and fantastic narratives that gradually arose were offensive to the sounder minds. Arrian simply wished to present to the public a clear, short, well-ordered narrative, which people could trust and read with pleasure. For this purpose he re-read the historians of Alexander, particularly Ptolemy and Aristobulus, companions of the conqueror, who seemed more trustworthy. By comparing and combining them, he composed his work, without personal research or new information, but also without vain, frivolous inventions. It is to-day the best account of the subject, and thoroughly readable. He showed himself an intelligent historian, an agreeable narrator, a correct writer, classic in style, a man of taste and judgment, yet without superior merit. If the part of Alexander is not given its full prominence, at least the principal elements in his biography are cleverly treated.

Appian is an exact contemporary of Arrian in point of age. He, too, was born at the close of the first century, and must also have died in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. But as a writer, he came to renown only when Arrian had acquired fame, toward the close of Hadrian's reign, or possibly under Antoninus. He was born at Alexandria, and seems to have been educated there, for he had a good practice as an advocate early in his life. Later, though we cannot follow his career in detail, we find him at Rome, where he seems to have been fiscal attorney under Hadrian and Antoninus. The latter appointed him procurator, at the request of his friend Fronto, and he probably held this office under Marcus Aurelius until his death.

He wrote but two works, an *Autobiography*, to-day lost, and a *Roman History*, which is extant in part ('Ρωμαϊκά), a work in twenty-

four books, covering the whole history of Rome, from the earliest times till the close of the reign of Trajan. This great mass of facts is difficult to take in at a glance; but he tried to give it a rational order. Instead of following events year by year, he grouped them so that each book should form a whole. The principle of grouping was often ethnographic, when he combined in a continuous narrative the account of all the relations of a given people with Rome, and often historical, when he set off by itself a period characterized by some prominent fact. Much of the work is lost. Besides scattered fragments, we have Books VI–VIII (the wars with Spain, the Second Punic War, the wars with Africa) and Books XI–XVII (the wars with Syria and the Parthians, the war with Mithridates, and the beginning of the Civil Wars).

His greatest lack in dealing with so broad a subject was that of philosophic insight. He had no profound understanding of the relations of cause and effect. The order he adopted has its convenience; in reality, he was forced to violate the sequence of events, though at times he made them unintelligible by destroying the bond between the history of Rome and that of her conquered provinces. The defect is noticeable in each of the different portions of the work now extant. His explanations are almost never satisfactory. There is no reflection, no penetrating intuition. The imagination is mediocre; the narrative is colorless and unanimated. These are grave defects; yet the author has considerable merits, too. His exposition is marked by ease and clearness, and not spoiled with empty rhetoric, bombast, or useless digressions. The narrative is stocked with facts; he aims simply to instruct without repelling the reader, and is successful. Most of his facts are presented in their just aspect, and, on the whole, well enough comprehended. He is free from prejudice, aims to be truthful, and succeeds as far as it is possible for one who does not go deeply into psychology or politics. His work has enough sanity, honesty, and breadth of scope to recommend it to any one interested in the history of Rome. His language is not so pure as Arrian's, containing more contemporary mannerisms: yet it is that of a well-educated man, not given to vulgar negligence or false rhetoric.

**10. Later Historical Writing. Dio Cassius. Herodian.**<sup>1</sup> — The writing of sound, sober history, estimable rather than brilliant, con-

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Dio Cassius by Dindorf, 5 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1863–1865; Melber, 5 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1896; Boissevain, *Cassi Dionis Historia Romana*, Berlin, Weidmann, 1894–1900.

Herodian by Bekker, Leipsic, Teubner, 1855; Mendelssohn, Leipsic, 1883. English translation by J. Hart, London, 1749. French translation by E. Gros, 10 vols., Paris, 1845–1870.

Consult: Reimar, *De Vita et Scriptis Dionis*, in Bekker's edition.



tinued through the remainder of the second century and well on into the third. Its principal representatives were Dio Cassius and Herodian.

Dio Cassius (Cassius Dio Cocceianus), like Arrian and the philosopher Dio Chrysostom, his relative by marriage, was a Greek of Bithynia. He was born at Nicæa shortly before 155. As the son of a high imperial officer, he followed the *cursus honorum*. He was a senator before the advent of Commodus in 180. In that reign he contented himself with pleading. He became prætor in 194 by favor of Pertinax. Septimius and Caracalla added no office to his honors. Macrinus nominated him in 218 imperial commissary at Smyrna and Pergamon; Alexander Severus made him consul, then governor of Africa, about 224. After that he governed Dalmatia and Upper Pannonia. In these various functions he evinced firmness and intelligence. After being consul for the second time in 229, he retired to his own country to pass his closing years in peace, and probably died there between 230 and 240. In brief, he was a politician, an administrator, a general, and withal a man well prepared to write history.

The great work that has preserved his name is a history of Rome in eighty books. Begun about 200, it was almost completed twenty-two years later; but it then extended only to the death of Septimius Severus. In his last years it was completed by a more hurried account of later events, probably to the end of his second consulate. Consequently it comprised the whole history of Rome from the beginning. We have but twenty-four books (XXXVII–LX), from the year 68 B.C. to the year 47 A.D., with more or less extensive fragments of the others. The missing parts are in a measure supplied by an abridgment which the monk Xiphilinus made in the eleventh century: and by the history of Zonaras (twelfth century), who used Dio's work freely.

He prepared himself with seriousness to write the *History*. He read carefully, compared, and criticised the historians of the different ages of Rome,—Romans such as Varro, Sallust, Cæsar, Asinius Pollio, Livy, and others,—no doubt also Greeks such as Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. But he does not seem to have gone back to their sources, nor to have sought to complete or correct them by the study of memoirs, correspondence, archives, and monuments. His information, accordingly, is of moderate worth, though valuable for its abundance and choice of details, but much less interesting and suggestive than, for example, that of Plutarch. The care for chronological and geographical exactitude attests the author's scrupulousness. In the last part of his work, which is, unfortu-

nately, much mutilated, he spoke as an eye-witness of things that had taken place in his own time. What he says of them has a particular interest. But the case is exceptional. Then, too, he has real weaknesses; dreams and prophecies are grave events for him, and he multiplies accounts of them to a ridiculous extreme. Besides, his mind, though naturally judicious, lacks depth and penetration. He cannot rise at need above prejudices and party feelings, nor grasp the whole of an epoch or of a statesman's activity, nor yet select the leading features of a historic character. His account is sensible, substantial, free from excess, and of sufficient accuracy to make it generally probable. One feels, in reading him, that he is not misleading, yet scarcely that one is given full, vivid information concerning many important but obscure points.

His literary merit seems to have been highly appreciated by his contemporaries and the scholars of the succeeding ages. Photius praises the nobility of Dio's style, the choice of his expressions, the artistic construction of his periods and their rhythm, and the general clearness of his language. The eulogy is not wholly undeserved. Having had a very careful literary education, he strove to write in a classic style, without sophistry or affectation of Atticism. The general movement of his narrative is simple; it could be read without effort, often even with pleasure. But his art is not really superior. Monotony in narrative, with lack of vigor, of vivacity, and of imagination, occasional pettiness in reflection, constant want of accent and emphasis, and a certain dryness everywhere manifest — these are his characteristics. The harangues which, in the manner of the classic historians, he introduces into his narrative are long, artificial, and wearisome. He has neither sufficient philosophic insight to select the essential ideas of a situation, nor sufficient art to bring out well the character of his personages.

Though less well known to-day, Herodian is scarcely inferior in merit; but his work has neither the same extent nor the same historical importance. His life may be said to fall approximately between 165 and 255. Although he wrote in Greek, he was possibly a Roman by birth. He states that he held imperial offices, though without mentioning them in detail.

His *History of the Successors of Marcus Aurelius* (Τῆς μετὰ Μάρκον βασιλείας ἱστορίαι) was begun about 250 and never finished. Its design included the period from 160 to 238; and it aims, he informs us, to recount the acts of the emperors whom he has known in person. Hence it was the sovereigns that he had in view rather than the destinies of the Empire, and his work does have a marked biographical tendency. The sincerity he professes so emphatically

seems real; he appears to have sought loyally for the truth. His information is based less on reading than on personal observation, on notes taken from day to day, and on what he saw or heard said. It is interesting, without being either full in details or even always precise. What he noted best, though only in general, is the moral phase of history, the character of the emperors and their counsellors, the influences to which they were subject, and the movements of public opinion.

An imitator of Thucydides like Dio, he spoils his model, and avoids false rhetoric with difficulty. His harangues are too numerous, and are offensive, owing to their misuse of classical allusions. His narratives have more merit. They atone for his defects. If his language is not wholly pure, and if his sentences too often show imitation and artifice, at least the style has elegance, and even brilliance now and then.

The history of literature need not take note of the other historians of the second and third centuries, whose works we possess only in fragments.<sup>1</sup> The only one that really has any value is Dexippus of Athens, a contemporary of Aurelian, a statesman, general, and writer, who gave an account, in his *Wars against the Scythians*, of the first Gothic invasions.

**11. Scholars and Compilers. Pausanias. The Library of Apollodorus. Diogenes Laertius.** — In addition to history proper, there is a large group of diverse works without real literary merit, often cited for their documentary value. We can neither study them here nor quite pass them by in silence. It will suffice to mention them.

Pausanias the Traveller, who lived at the close of the second century, is important on account of his *Description of Greece* (*Περὶ Ἑλλάδος*).<sup>2</sup> a valuable work on ancient Greece, its mythology, topography, and monuments. The author was neither artist nor archæologist, neither student nor writer, yet he might almost be considered any of these. He was an amateur, who had at his disposal many facts which we lack, and saw many things which we can no longer see. Therefore his work, though devoid of originality, is to-day a real manual for the use of all who study ancient Greece.

<sup>1</sup> C. Mæller, *Fr. græc. Hist. Græc.*, vol. III, *sup. cit.*; Dindorf, *Historiæ Græci Minoræ*, Teubner.

<sup>2</sup> Editions: Dindorf, Paris, Didot, 1845; Schubart, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1873-1874; Hitzig and Blümner, edition with archæological notes and essays, in course of publication at Berlin since 1896.

English translation with a commentary by J. G. Frazer, 6 vols., London, 1898, a noteworthy product of English scholarship; Harrison and Verrall, *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens*, London, 1890.

German: Gaillet, *Über Pausanias*, Graz, 1890; A. Kalkmann, *Pausanias der Periegete*, Berlin, 1886.

There is sometimes cited a work *On Strategy* (Στρατηγήματα) in eight books, dedicated by the Macedonian Polyænus to the emperor Marcus Aurelius.<sup>1</sup> It is a simple compilation, but contains accounts which supply the place of certain lacunæ in the historians.

The *Library* of Apollodorus<sup>2</sup> bears without warrant the name of a scholar who lived at Athens in the second century B.C. In reality, it is the work of an unknown author of the early centuries of the Empire. It contains, in the driest style possible, genealogies of the gods and heroes. It can neither be read through nor left out of account in dealing with Greek mythology. To the same period and type of composition belongs the little collection of *Metamorphoses* in prose, which bears the name of Antoninus Liberalis, an author otherwise unknown.

A work of more importance, if not of greater merit, is that of Diogenes Laertius, entitled *Lives of the Philosophers*.<sup>3</sup> The author, who seems to have lived at the beginning of the third century, was a man without inspiration or talent. The plan of his work is very superficial. He enumerates the leading representatives of each school; gives a *résumé* of the life of each, introducing a quantity of inauthentic anecdotes, and witticisms that are more than merely suspect; then adds a list of their works, without, however, studying seriously questions of chronology or even authenticity; and presents a somewhat confused account of their theories. He seems to have regarded this as the history of philosophy; but, however mediocre his work, it is indispensable to-day for the study of the ancient philosophers.

**12. Sophistry: its Origin; Sketch of its History in the Second and Third Centuries.**<sup>4</sup>—Let us take up now the study of literature, which constitutes our proper object. As much as moral philosophy, and much more than history, oratory shows, beginning with the second century, the revival of Hellenic genius. But it is no longer the oratory of the days of Demosthenes. Not having a real purpose, it created an artificial one. Almost estranged from public affairs, it was produced chiefly in the schools, in polite society, and in the courts; and the schools and society gave it its tone in the courts. The representatives of such oratory reassumed a title of honor once decried, calling themselves sophists; and their art they

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Wölfflin-Melber, Teubner Collection.

<sup>2</sup> Editions: C. Müller, *Fragm. Hist. Græc.*, vol. I; R. Wagner, *Mythographi Græci*, I. Leipsic, Teubner, 1894.

<sup>3</sup> Editions by Cobet, Paris, Didot, 1850; and Holtze, Leipsic, 1833.

<sup>4</sup> Consult: Westermann, *Gesch. der Beredsamkeit*, Leipsic, 1833; Bernhardt, *Gesch. d. gr. Litteratur*, vol. I; E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*, Leipsic, 1876 (chap. III); H. von Arnim, *sup. cit.*, p. 496, introduction.



called sophistry. This is the second form of sophistry in literary history, and it was but loosely connected with that of Gorgias and Protagoras.

It arose in the schools of Asia Minor toward the close of the first century. In origin, it was only a continuation and development of the exercises that were in use in every period. But when the Empire was at peace and society was enjoying leisure, it rapidly took on new brilliance in the cities, which were rich, commercial, somewhat tumultuous, and jealous. The schools were well attended and excessively vain. Clever masters were winning reputations and prodigious fortunes. They brought their art before the public in the form of elocutionary speeches, before the courts in pleas that were modelled upon such speeches, and before city councils and provincial governors, sometimes even before senators or emperors, in harangues that used the most serious affairs merely as the occasion for displays of wit and grace. From the beginning of the second century, the Greek Orient swarmed with orators of renown who were applauded, extolled, flattered, and compared with the great men of former days; they literally drew the multitude after them. Their success was brief, because artifice and fashion had too great a part in it; yet in the art to which they were devoted there is a serious element worthy of consideration.

The sophistry of the Empire was based upon traditional rhetoric. It implied a study, legitimate and useful of itself, of invention, composition, and elocution—or, in short, of thought and its expression. This study had become more and more superficial. The men called Asiatics often put practice before theory, and sought to develop in themselves mere natural facility rather than reflection and good taste. It was well to oppose such a whim by returning to rhetoric and the study of classic models. This seems, at least in the beginning, to have been the procedure of the sophists of the Empire. They had a knowledge of the orators and of the traditional rules, a liking for perfection and a sentiment of art which, however praiseworthy, were wanting in their predecessors. The reformed oratory, then, might have done honor to Greek genius, had it been on its guard against certain temptations. Though liberty of speech was much hampered, serious occasions were found for its development in legal trials, municipal and provincial business, religious reunions, and lectures. It was restrained by the ambition for great political subjects and the fondness for improvisation.

These light and vain “Asiatic” Greeks could not easily be content with being mere advocates in business matters. They wished to play a rôle, to combat tyrants, to stir the multitudes, to mourn

over great catastrophes; and as the rulers of the time were not to be combated, and stirring of the multitudes was no longer possible, rather than renounce their fine themes, they created imaginary occasions for them. Oratory thus became a theatrical fiction. Great word-artists played Themistocles, Pericles, Demosthenes, and Hyperides, braved Xerxes and lashed Philip, in finely decorated halls and before a leisurely audience which came as to the theatre. Their art, though good for its purpose, degenerated into puerility.

They were intoxicated with their success and tried to rival each other, aiming to increase their success by increasing artificially the difficulties to be overcome. So they improvised their discourses — at least in appearance — in order to make a greater impression. It was chiefly this tendency that changed their oratory into frivolous declamation. Once become an empty pageant, it strove more and more to dazzle, and depended for prestige on frivolous address instead of well-pondered rules of art. The more fashionable speakers asked their audience to propose a subject; and whatever it might be, they would begin at once to speak. Naturally they applied to the subject commonplaces already prepared and everywhere applicable. Serious reflection was impossible. Wit, antitheses, figures of speech, all was welcome that gave the illusion of perfect eloquence, and charmed listeners already enthusiastic. The sophist was simply a virtuoso executing infinite variations on the themes given, and inventing flourishes of every sort. Simplicity, good taste, and good sense were things of the past.

These few indications may suffice to characterize sophistry in general. Excepting some few, of whom we shall speak shortly, its representatives are scarcely known except from the *Lives of the Sophists* by Philostratus. There they are seen in action. Their habits and manners, their scholastic exercises, and the various forms of their art are shown. Among the most celebrated sophists were Nicetes of Smyrna (end of the first century), who was regarded as the restorer of eloquence; Scopelian of Clazomenæ, a renowned orator in the reigns of Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan; Isæus, a celebrated improviser, praised by Pliny the Elder (*Letters*, II, 3); Lollianus of Ephesus, the first to occupy at Athens the chair of eloquence which the city had founded; Antonius Polemo of Laodicea, a contemporary of Hadrian and Antoninus, one of the most remarkable of these artists of discourse, who has left us two declamations; Herodes Atticus, the most famous of all, equally celebrated for his oratory, his prodigious wealth, and his pomp, who was consul under Antoninus in 143, and died about 179, a little before the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius; Hadrian of Tyre, his disciple, who astonished

Athens by his luxury; and Ælius Aristides and the Philostrati, of whom we shall speak at somewhat greater length.

Sophistry shone with greatest brilliance in the second century. The large cities then attracted celebrated sophists and founded chairs for them. The emperors, following the example, in turn created positions for professors of oratory and philosophy, whose remuneration came from the public funds. From the year 176, owing to the foundations of Marcus Aurelius, Athens was a real university city. This state of things continued through the third century and was really to last as long as paganism. But the wars of the third century, the invasions, and the anarchy into which the Empire fell till the time of Diocletian, were less favorable to this art of peace than the tranquillity of the preceding one under the Antonines. We must go to the fourth century to find more names that deserve our attention.

**13. Ælius Aristides and Maximus of Tyre.**<sup>1</sup> — In general, the works of the sophists were necessarily short-lived and have disappeared. In the second century, an orator of the schools, Ælius Aristides, and a polite philosopher, Maximus of Tyre, alone have bequeathed to us literary legacies of any importance.

Ælius Aristides was born at Adriani in Mysia in 129. His father was rich and well known. Though, like most of the sophists, he travelled in all parts of the Empire, yet he lived chiefly at Smyrna. He became famous as an elocutionist in the reigns of Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, and Commodus. He was seriously ill for a dozen years, and has left us, as it were, the diary of his treatment in the *Sacred Discourses* (Ἱεροὶ λόγοι), a curious monument of the superstitions of the time, and of his own faith in the revelations of the healing-god Asclepias. His reputation rests upon his discourses, of which we have still an ample collection. Some pertain to events of the day, and others treat fictitious subjects; all, or almost all, were written to be recited in fashionable oratorical entertainments, then called forensics (ἐπιδείξεις). The most celebrated are the *Discourse to Plato* in defence of the four statesmen criticised in the *Gorgias* (Πρὸς Πλάτωνα ὑπὲρ τῶν τεσσάρων), the *Panathenæica*, and the double *Apology for Rhetoric*, which likewise aims to answer certain objections of Plato.

He was not an improviser like most of his contemporaries. He improvised, indeed, only when he could not avoid it. In general, his

<sup>1</sup> *Ælius Aristides*, by Dindorf, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1829; Bruno Keil, *Ælii Aristidis quæ supersunt Omnia*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1898. *Maximus of Tyre*, Dübner, Paris, Didot, 1840, in the volume with the *Characters* of Theophrastus; English translation by Taylor, 2 vols., London, 1804.

discourses were carefully thought out and revised at leisure. Yet his art was not essentially different from what was then in vogue. It has its good qualities and also its defects. He shows a mind singularly ingenious in the invention of arguments, he abounds in resources of every sort, he can reason; he knows history and profits thereby, and he knows the art of using examples. His style is formed upon good models and, in general, is pure and flexible, sometimes strong and brilliant. The great fault that spoils all is his frivolity. He does not speak under the influence of conviction or passion, nor because he has anything to say; but for mere show. Oratory thus conceived is vanity, and quickly repels.

Maximus of Tyre is the author of forty-one dissertations or conversations on philosophical subjects (*Διαλέξεις*). All that we know of him is that he flourished under Commodus. His philosophy was Platonism mingled with various elements; but, in fact, it was scarcely more than a pretext for displaying the frivolous graces of his wit. The *διάλεκξις*, much in vogue among the sophists, was really a lecture, in which the orator spoke in his own name; it was opposed to the *μελέτη*, wherein he represented some historic personage as speaking. In the conversations, he treated principally moral subjects. He enjoyed acting as a moralist and a preacher. Sometimes he touched on religious questions. But whatever his theme, his commonplace elegance remained uniformly vague and superficial. His style was one of labored affectation, and recalled the manner of Gorgias by its finical symmetry.

**14. Lucian; his Life and Writings; his Rôle and Genius.**<sup>1</sup>—The only great name that we meet at this time is that of Lucian. Though not in the strict domain of sophistry, he is at least in its vicinity. Very different from the empty rhetoricians, he is both a producer of ideas and a creator of forms. Though sophistic in his education and his habits as a writer, he is not so in the native vigor of his mind and the independence of his character. A pamphleteer, moralist, storyteller, and dialectician, he has a personal power not found at this time in any other man.

He was born at Samosata in northern Syria about 125 A.D., and spoke Syriac in his youth. His parents were humble and destined

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Hemsterhuys und Reitz, 4 vols., Amsterdam and Trèves, 1743–1746, with scholia, notes, and a Latin translation; G. Dindorf, Paris, Didot, 1840, with Latin translation; Fritzsche, Rostock, 1860–1874; Jacobitz, 3 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1871–1874; Sommerbrodt, *Lucianus*, Berlin, 1886–1893.

English translation of six dialogues, Irwin, London, 1894.

Consult: K. G. Jacob, *Charakteristik Lucians von Samosate*, Hamburg, 1832; the essays in Fritzsche's edition; M. Croiset, *Essai sur la vie et les œuvres de Lucien*, Paris, 1882; S. Chabert, *L'Atticisme de Lucien*, Paris, 1897; Rabasté, *Quid comitis debuerit Lucianus*, Paris, 1856.



him for a trade. He was apprenticed to his uncle, a sculptor. But his free nature revolted. He obtained leave to study, and attended the schools, first, probably of his own country, then those of Ionia, with a view to becoming a teacher of rhetoric and a lawyer. For a time, about 150, he probably composed pleas at Antioch; but, once out of the schools, he led, on the whole, the life of a travelling sophist. He gave lectures from city to city, in Greece, Macedon, and Italy; then lived for some time as a professor of rhetoric in one of the half-Greek cities of southern Gaul. About 160, or a little later, he returned to the Orient, even reëntering Samosata, and finally, in 165, settling at Athens with his people. He seems to have lived there a score of years, between about 165 and 185. Disgusted with the emptiness of rhetoric, he retired with fame from the tribunals and sophistry proper, but not from the conversations in which he excelled. His originality was abundantly displayed. He became a pamphleteer and satirist by profession, composing dialogues, pamphlets, and satiric narratives, and reading them before the public. His spirit, his boldness, which made him offensive to his critics, and his impertinent, censorious scepticism, made him a noted personage in Athens. This continued several years; then probably his success began to wane. To revive it, he undertook new travels. Finally, when advanced in years, he entered, like many other sophists, into the administration of the Empire. He was given high judicial functions in Egypt. From then on, he disappears from sight, and we may suppose that, toward the close of the reign of Commodus, or a little before 192, he died, still performing these functions. The current legends respecting his death bear no marks of authenticity.

The collection of his works as it has come to us includes eighty-two treatises. About thirty seem to have been attributed to him wrongly: hence half a hundred can be considered authentic. They are all short pamphlets, dialogues, dissertations, or narratives, whose theme was suggested to the author by various events or incidents of the day, by his reading, or by his conversation with friends. In the whole collection, there is not a single composition which is extensive enough to have demanded long preparation. The character of his work reveals him as a sort of combative, fantastic journalist, before real journalism existed.

The most remarkable of his writings seem to date from the time of his maturity. We may name as such the pretty satire *On the Manner of Writing History*, composed probably in Ionia shortly before 165; the *Hermodotus*, in which the author, forty years of age, professes scepticism in matters of philosophy: the

*Double Accusation*, the *Sects at Auction*, and the *Angler*, which are the first ringing polemics of the Athenian period; next a group of small, but artistic, works dominated by a moral purpose, the *Dialogues of the Dead*, the *Arrival in Hades* (Κατάπλους), the *Necromancy*, the *Charon*, the *Saturnalian Letters*, the *Cynic*, the *Cock*, the *Timon*, the *Aspirations*, the *Symposium*; also a group in which the satire is chiefly directed against mythology and the superstitions of the time, the *Dialogues of the Gods*, the *Sea-dialogues*, the *Icaromenippus*, the *Friend of Falsehood*, the *Festival of Cronus*, the *Prometheus*, the *Assembly of the Gods*, *Zeus as a Tragedian*, *Zeus Convicted* (Ζεὺς ἐλεγχόμενος); and in a type more special, the *Parasite*, the *Lexiphanes*, and the *Pseudologist*, in which he mocks pedantic rhetoricians and grammarians. Among the dissertations must be mentioned the *Timarchus*, that *Against an Ignorant Book-collector*, the *Teacher of the Rhetoricians*, and that *On Those who Work only for Pay*. Among the satiric narratives is the letter *On the Death of Peregrinus*, in which he recounts mockingly the suicide of the Cynic of that name, who cast himself into the fire at the Olympic Games, probably in 165; the *True History*, a parody of the fantastic inventions common among poets, travellers, and even historians and geographers; the *Alexander*, a satiric sketch of the life of the impostor Alexander of Abonutichos, who founded, in the time of Marcus Aurelius, an oracle in Pontus; and the *Ass*, in which he describes jestingly, in the manner of Lucius of Patras, the metamorphosis of a man into an ass, and his adventures as such.

In the capricious and rather incoherent diversity of his writings, there is evident a man whose character, rôle, and genius merit at least brief consideration.

Charmed by sophistry in his youth, he was at first a rhetorician, like the others. As such, he acquired keenness of mind, power and elegance of language, flexibility in dialectic, and a sparkling variety of ideas, images, and facts. But there was developed also an ineradicable frivolity, too ready to be content with the necessities for playing a rôle. At about forty years of age, his active, intuitive, sincere nature revolted. The rupture secured him a place apart from his contemporaries. It showed in him a loyalty and boldness greatly to his honor. He maintained his cause courageously and with infinite tact, not letting himself be disturbed by the ill-feelings which he excited. He had undertaken to defend the truth, and pursued his enterprise courageously. But to defend the truth, one must possess it, or at least, seek it seriously. He loved neither study nor long reflection; quick intuitions suited him better; and he affirmed as true whatever he happened to believe. There was lightness and

infatuation in this foe of falsity ; at bottom, there was even a narrow conception of truth, since he based it upon evidence which was often only apparent. He himself lacked a doctrine. Half Epicurean, half Cynic in morals, his ideal consisted in prudent living, keeping free from illusions, attaching himself to nothing firmly, and being independent of every one. This is a negative and consequently incomplete doctrine, condemned to remain in practice mediocre and unfruitful. As a representative of free thought, he had the merit of making manifest the ridiculousness, the odium, the puerilities of the myths that formed the basis of the Græco-Roman religion. But no one took less care to distinguish religious sentiment, which is innate in man, from its temporary aberrations, and to reserve as large a field for the true sentiment as possible. His incredulity is not even founded on science, which he ignores and despises ; it comes chiefly from an instinctive aversion of his good sense to falsity and illusion. His arguments he borrows purely and simply from the current, superficial Epicureanism. From every point of view, then, there is something deficient in him. He is a man of initiative and honesty, but hasty, and content with the half-truth. To this, however, he lends a vivid seductiveness, and a momentary appearance of plausibility.

Though rather a man of action than a thinker, he is really superior as a writer. The foundation of his talent is wit in the modern sense of the term, the gift of ready opinions, of pleasing discoveries, and of satiric phrases. His thought is singularly clear and quick, his insight keen, clear, and ready, his invention full of delightful fancy, his dialectic ingenious, always at hand, and singularly fertile in unforeseen suggestions. His imagination is animated by satiric humor and loves to create playfully, unmindful of strict artistic truth, yet with a keen sense of the real even when travestyng it. What is lacking in his genius is a certain degree of sensibility. Nothing charms so much as goodness beneath irony, sympathy beneath satire. There is something harsh in the irony of Lucian.

The style is a curious mixture of imitation and spontaneity. But on the whole, it proceeds rather from classic models than from the Greek spoken in his vicinity. He had begun when young to read the authors studied in the schools, both poets and prose writers, and throughout life continued to re-read them. His mind was permeated with their diction. Owing to remarkable ease of assimilation, he became a true Attic through intercourse with them — not an exclusive one, pedantic and intolerant, like some of his contemporaries, but an Attic like the distinguished men of ancient Athens, who disdained nothing that was Greek. From them he obtained his

vocabulary almost altogether. The turn of his expressions recalls chiefly that of the Middle and New Comedy, probably also that of forgotten authors, such as Bion the Borysthenite or Menippus of Gadara. In the imitation, whether consciously or unconsciously, his personality is everywhere manifest. Though indebted for his vocabulary to his authors, he handled it with charming cleverness; in using it, he has a variety and richness that are very rare. Subtlety is one of the most striking features of his language. It is not labored nor strained, but thoroughly allied with satire, raillery, enthusiasm, action, and all the qualities of life and brilliance. Even force, when helpful, is not wanting. His sentences are adroitly formed, artistic in structure, free and flexible. In all his movements, there is a freedom not found in any other writer of the time.

**15. His Literary Creations.**—Owing to these eminent gifts, he was almost the sole original thinker in an age when Greek genius had almost ceased to be original. Several types in literature trace their origin principally to him.

The satiric dialogue, doubtless, was not created by him outright. As he acknowledges, he owes the idea and model of it partly to the Socratics, chiefly Plato, partly to the comic poets, and partly to Menippus. But in combining these contributions to suit his purpose, he added his own impress, making something new, which remained his own. The type is not described by a simple formula. Some of the shorter dialogues have but a single situation, which is indicated in the opening words; for example, the celebrated *Dialogues of the Dead*. Others are developed into miniature dramas, with a kind of action. This is the type that he seems to have preferred. He achieved in it all that was possible; we may cite among others, the *Sects at Auction*, the *Angler*, the *Double Accusation*, etc.; the action is, of course, only slight. Very rarely, one finds rudimentary digressions; generally all is made up of simple incidents. Incidents and digressions are proportionate to the importance of the drama, which, in itself, is almost nothing. Surprise, drollness, vivacity, constitute its merits. There is plausibility in the fancy, reason in the caprice, but no more than is indispensable. The action is simply a means for presenting vividly the personages and making them real. They are beings without consistency, in whom all studied psychology would be too cumbersome. Most of them have only the sketch of a character, a striking trait that is the gift of their dramatic life. Menippus and Diogenes are the Cynics among the dead as they were among the living; Timon is a peevish misanthrope; Micyllus, a simple, poor man, with abundance of wishes, and honest. The allegorical personages, too, live this simple life. One must see that such



conceptions allow their author every sort of liberty. He constantly forgets the personage whom he is representing, to jest or moralize in his own name. It is an added grace in these works of sparkling raillery, where reason can please only by being in concealment.

The polemic is indebted to him almost as much. He wrote now a satiric narrative, now an argument, now an ironical work of instruction. If Greek literature had not suffered losses which hinder us from knowing the character of its polemic, we should certainly find models of each of these forms of raillery. He renewed them and excelled in them. If his fancy here is less inventive, free, bold, than in his dialogues, it is still everywhere present, combined with satiric animation, piquant observations, ingenious reflections, and lively argument; and the combination seems to have been the distinctive feature of his style. Nothing is more varied than the fabric of these writings. Whether the composition be narrative or dialectic, he weaves for it a whole marvellous embroidery of anecdotes, witty sayings, citations, and classical allusions, which, without obscuring the leading design, enliven it in a thousand ways. Others have as great a gift of irony, some have surpassed him in force of argumentation; but perhaps no one has equalled him in the dazzling variety wherein he sports with so much grace and cleverness.

The tale of fancy, of which he has left an exquisite model in his *True History*, seems to be his more properly still. The original which he so pleasingly imitated was the paradoxical narrative of travellers, from those of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, to those of Iambulus concerning the open sea. But to avow in the very first line that one intends telling falsehoods, and then to keep one's reader amused, through ten books, with avowed falsehoods, really called for all his talent; especially as there is no theme nor continuous satire, nothing but a prodigious series of pleasing or burlesque inventions succeeding one another in the most astounding variety. The gift of creating forms and movements, the talent for realistic description and picturesque imagination, inexhaustible wit, and boldness in absurdities, make it extraordinary. Among all his creations, this had the most brilliant success. Rabelais and Swift drew their inspiration from it, not to mention other less illustrious imitators.

It is evident, therefore, how far Lucian's work, though connected with contemporary sophistry, surpasses it in every sense. The fashion of which he took advantage might have disappeared without his suffering thereby; he remained one of the great representatives of good sense in satire, one of the ever admirable masters of raillery.

**16. Alciphron; the Philostrati; Ælian.**—A few other more or less direct disciples of sophistry, though humble and inferior, must not be wholly passed by in silence.

Alciphron<sup>1</sup> was probably a little younger than Lucian, with whom he seems to have had relations; and is known from a collection of *Letters*. The fictitious letter was a favorite exercise in the rhetorical schools of the time. Alciphron merely perfected the scholastic type. His letters, ostensibly written by people of every sort and class, fishers, peasants, parasites, courtesans, bring before us in short compass situations analogous to those formerly represented in comedy. Among such fictitious correspondents is Menander himself; and all the short dramas are supposed to take place in his day. An Atticist in the best sense of the word, Alciphron loves to transport himself into the Epicurean Athens of the fourth century, whose elegance, easy manners, and brilliant, dissipated life he paints with grace and spirit, without, however, forgetting the miseries of the poor and the avarice of the miserly. Though much inferior to Lucian, he has something of his ease, adroitness, and playfulness, though not equalling him in fancy or delineation, and by no means in the worth of his ideas.

A little after Alciphron come two men of the same name and family, uncle and nephew, Philostratus of Athens and Philostratus of Lemnos, who were both sophists by profession. They are often confounded with each other.<sup>2</sup>

Philostratus of Athens owes his fame chiefly to two works, the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* and the *Lives of the Sophists*. In the former he wrote the biography of a celebrated Pythagorean impostor, who lived in the first century A.D. The work, though colorless and pretentious, is interesting chiefly as showing the credulity of the time. It was composed at the request of the Empress Julia, wife of Septimius Severus, consequently before 217, when she died. The *Lives of the Sophists* is a collection of notices, far from forming a history of sophistry, though giving an idea of it. The series of portraits is presented to us bombastically, fastidiously, and with uncritical admiration. The lives have value because the author composed them from collections of letters, traditions of the schools, discourses then extant, and personal recollections. From the same

<sup>1</sup> Bergler, *Alciphronis Epistolæ*, Leipsic, 1715; Meineke, Leipsic, 1853; Seiler, Leipsic, 1853; Hercher, in the *Didot Epistolographi Græci*, Paris, 1873; Wagner, Leipsic, 1878.

<sup>2</sup> EDITIONS: Westermann, Paris, Didot, 1849; Kayser, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1870-1871; Benndorf, Leipsic, 1893, revised by Reisch, 1901.

English translation of the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* by Berwick, London, 1809.

author we have a treatise *On Gymnastics*, and some *Letters*, on which there is no need of dwelling.

Philostratus of Lemnos has left us a dialogue entitled *Heroicus*, and a collection called the *Images* (Εἰκόνες). The *Heroicus* presents a vine-dresser of Eleon, who tells a traveller of some apparitions of Homeric heroes that he had seen, and the daily conversation he had had with them. The dreamy mysticism of the third century is mingled with testimony of some value respecting the old legends. The *Images* is better known. He describes and explains sixty-four pictures which, he says, were in a porch at Naples. Real or unreal, they are the occasion for ingenious and brilliant discourses. There appears, with the sophistic rhetoric, at least grace, skill, life, some charm, despite the affectation, and even good taste.

At the end of the third century there appeared another Philostratus, grandson of Philostratus of Lemnos, who composed, in imitation of him, a second collection of *Images*, inferior to the preceding. To these are ordinarily joined the *Descriptions of Statues* (Ἐκφράσεις) of a certain Callistratus, who is otherwise unknown, but whose work is exaggerated, laborious, and fantastic.

Claudius Ælianus,<sup>1</sup> a Sabine of Præneste, was a contemporary of Philostratus of Athens. The latter counts him, not without reason, as a Greek sophist, for he wrote much, and always in Greek. We have a treatise of his *On Animals* and a collection entitled *Varia Historia*. The spirit of these works is the same. They are collections of facts, devoid of criticism and true science, and hampered by a deplorable tendency to moralize and dogmatize without occasion. His composition consists in stringing together short tales of history, mingled with puerile reflections. Yet he did not write without research. His false elegance threw an illusion over his contemporaries, who seem to have considered him a remarkable man. He was surnamed Μελίγλωσσος, the "Honey-tongued" Ælian. His sweetish quality comes near inspiring disgust to-day. His *Varia Historia* has worth chiefly on account of the rather large number of historical facts it contains. His *Rustic Letters* have preserved the titles of a few comedies, freely recast in compositions of fancy.

**17. Poetry: Oppian: Babrius.**—The poetry of the second and third centuries closely resembles the sophistry of which it sometimes shows the influence. It need not detain us long, for it is poetry of the schools, pure imitation, with no originality, and, on the whole, of little value.

We may leave aside the mythological or historical epic, which is

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Hercher, Paris, Didot, 1858; the same, 2d ed., Leipzig, Teubner, 1864.

always insignificant. Drama no longer existed. Only didactic poetry still had any life. Geographical poems may be found at this time, such as the *Tour of the World*, by Dionysius the Periegete, medical and botanical poems, etc. It will be sufficient to select two poets of this type, Oppian and Babrius, the latter of whom wrote fables.

Towards the close of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Oppian<sup>1</sup> of Cilicia composed a poem in five books, *On Fishing* (Ἀλιευτικά), which we still possess. There are descriptions and precepts, commendable for certain merits of elegance and good living; but scarcely any real poetry. Another poem, *On the Chase* (Κυνηγετικά), is likewise attributed to Oppian. In reality, it seems to belong to another Oppian, a Syrian who lived in the beginning of the third century. It is much inferior in merit to the preceding.

Babrius,<sup>2</sup> however, has greater fame, and is almost classic. We know nothing of his personality nor of his life. The very period when he lived is uncertain. There is reason for believing that it was shortly before the end of the second century. At various times he composed a series of apologies, of which only a portion has come down to us. Most of his fables are simply the old, current ones, such as tradition attributed to Æsop, that were in circulation everywhere, with a small number invented by him in imitation of the early ones. He has not much imagination, no lively sensibility, no original turn of mind. His merit is that of a story-teller of moderate talent. A rather clever versifier, he used the iambic trimeter called choliambic (halting), which has a trochee or spondee in the sixth foot. It closely resembled prose, and was quite appropriate to his type of composition. The collection was early admitted into the curriculum of the schools, and it remained there, once having been admitted, for by nature it was a book suitable for children.

**18. The Romance.**<sup>3</sup> — Beside poetry, we may place, as a secondary product of sophistry, the romance, though we must not emphasize the term. The greatest interest of the Greek romance is that it marked the beginning of a type destined to a most brilliant career. In itself, it was a mediocre literary product.

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Lehrs, Paris. Didot, 1842, in the volume of the *Poetæ Didactici*; the scholia by Bussemaker are in the Didot volume containing the *Scholia in Theocritum*.

<sup>2</sup> EDITIONS: Rutherford, London, 1883, with dissertations and a commentary; Crusius, Leipsic, Teubner, 1896; editio minor, 1897.

Translation into English verse by James Davis, London, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> EDITIONS: Hirschig, *Scriptores Erotici*, Paris, Didot, 1856; Hercher, *Scriptores Erotici*, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1856; J. Bekker, *Heliodorus*, Leipsic, Teubner, 1855.

Consult: Chassang, *Histoire du roman et de ses rapports avec l'histoire dans l'antiquité grecque et latine*, Paris, 1862; E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, Leipsic, 1876.



What properly constitutes romance is the sketch of a developing love sentiment. In its remote origins, it was connected with the painting of amorous sentiments in the Alexandrian period. It sprang from the elegy, the idyll, certain scenes of epic, the so-called *Milesian Tales*, and countless stories inserted in history and mythology to introduce the sentiments then in vogue. But it sprang chiefly and much more directly from the exercises of the schools, from the subjects which delighted the subtle fancy of the rhetoricians, who created at pleasure seductions, attacks of pirates and brigands, rapes, separations, and recognitions, to obtain material for their discourses. It was in such exercises that the Greek mind acquired a taste for improbable adventures, multiplied and complicated incidents, competitions, and conflicts, in the most extraordinary circumstances; together with the habit of treating the sentiments as themes for oratory. These exercises established the commonplaces of romantic composition. From the amours of elegy, the conventions of the schools, and the fondness for digression, there was formed the groundwork of Greek romance. Its origin shows the reason for its innate weakness and meagreness; not arising from observation, it seemed unreal. It has features of the drama,—its action, its surprises,—and early received its name (*δράμα*, *δραματικόν*). But what gives drama its force, the natural action resulting from the characters, is precisely what was here most wanting.

The earliest known attempts at romance seem to date from the first century of our era. About that time Antonius Diogenes composed the *Marvels beyond Thule*, in twenty-four books, of which we have now only a summary. It was an incoherent work, in which marvellous adventures were developed to infinity, through the entire world, and beyond. We likewise know the *Babylonians* only from an account. It was composed between 166 and 180 by Iamblichus, a Hellenized Syrian. Here psychology had more place and geography much less. To the third century is assigned, though with no very definite arguments, the collection of *Ephesian Tales* of Xenophon of Ephesus, which are still extant. The romance has for its subject the love of the beautiful Habrocomes of Ephesus and the maid Anthea—or rather the incidents which separated them immediately after their marriage, and came to a close only with the narrative itself. Here are found, if not complete portraits, at least somewhat clear sketches. But the author has the gift of realism only to a slight extent. His story is light, sketchy, and tends to fine writing, but is superficial even to dryness.

The most considerable romance which Greek genius produced is that of Heliodorus, entitled the *Ethiopica* or *Theagenes and Chariclea*.

The author was a Phœnician Greek; and the effort has been made, though unsuccessfully, to identify him with a Thessalian bishop of the same name. He seems to have lived in the third century. In substance his romance is like the preceding; its adventures are of the same character, equally improbable and equally complicated. But it has a merit of composition all its own, and many of the personages represented have life and good relief in the drawing.

To these names let us add that of Achilles Tatius, author of the *Adventures of Leucippus and Clitophon*; and that of Chariton of Lampsacus, for his romance of *Chareas and Callirrhœ*. Both seem in date to have fallen outside the period comprised in this chapter; they belong probably to the fourth or fifth century, possibly to the sixth; but they are connected with the writers just discussed through their imitation, which is tasteless and insipid. Their extremely mediocre productions are the last examples of Greek romance before the Byzantine period.

Special mention is due to a pastoral story of Longus entitled *Daphnis and Chloë*. The author was a Greek sophist of unknown date; one can only place him indefinitely between the second and fifth centuries. His great merit is that his romance was a portrayal of character and sentiment, almost devoid of incidents, and limited to a single place. His heroes are two children, a boy and a girl, who almost grow up under the reader's eyes. There arises a sentiment of love between them, which gradually becomes conscious of itself. The few incidents are commonplace; but the descriptions of rustic life are graceful, and the study of the sentiment is clever. It is to be regretted that the merit of the work is sullied by false ingenuity and unrestrained license of imagination.

**19. Rhetoric and Grammar.** — Before leaving the sophistry of the second and third centuries, a few words, though but few, must be said concerning the works of philology. They may be considered as an accompaniment or a dependency of the sophistic movement.

Grammar was the first element in the education of the time, the first journey on the way to rhetoric. Some of the masters in the schools also cultivated it outside as an interesting branch of knowledge. Among such theorists must be named, in the second century, Apollonius, surnamed Dyscolus, who may be considered one of the originators of syntax; and his son Herodian, who continued his labors.<sup>1</sup> Next come the lexicographers, some of

<sup>1</sup> But the works of Apollonius and those of Herodian have always been published separately. [There is an edition of Apollonius in the *Corpus Grammaticorum Græcorum*, by Schneider-Uhlig; of Herodian in 3 vols., by Lentz, Leipsic, 1867. — Tr.]

Consult: É. Egger, *Apollonius Dyscole*, Paris, 1854.

whom dealt chiefly with words, establishing or contending against their legitimacy. Most of them were Atticists, more or less stringent guardians of the vocabulary used by the Attic writers of the fifth and fourth centuries. Others were rather antiquarians, for whom words were facts needing explanation or allusions requiring comment. Still others associated the two tendencies to some extent; and this makes it very difficult to classify them. We may cite without precise distinction, the Atticist Phrynichus,<sup>1</sup> a contemporary of Marcus Aurelius and author of a lost dictionary called *Preparation for Sophistry*, and of a work on the *Choice of Attic Words* (*Ἀττικιστής*), still in existence; Julius Pollux,<sup>2</sup> a teacher of the Emperor Commodus, who composed, under the title of *Onomasticon*, an ample collection still extant, though rather confused, full of information on antiquity; finally Harpocration, probably his contemporary, the author of an excellent *Lexicon of the Ten Orators*,<sup>3</sup> which we possess. A special place in the group must be reserved for a Greek of Naucratis in Egypt, Athenæus, who lived at the beginning of the third century. Under the title of *Symposium of the Sophists*,<sup>4</sup> he has left a real encyclopædia in dialogue form. It has no literary value, but is an inexhaustible mine of details, relating to the men and the life of the classical period.

The theory of rhetoric was also discussed at this time, though without reaching much greater perfection. Only its least obscure representatives can be named:<sup>5</sup> Hermogenes of Tarsus, a contemporary of Marcus Aurelius, who left a number of treatises constituting a regular course of rhetoric; Apsines of Gadara, who lived in the third century; Menander of Laodicea, somewhat younger still; and above all, Cassius Longinus, born about 220, and put to death in 273 for having promoted the rebellion of Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, against the Emperor Aurelian. To him has been falsely attributed the anonymous treatise *On the Sublime*, which has been already discussed: but he enjoyed in his lifetime a reputation as teacher and critic which we have no reason to consider undeserved.

**20. Philosophy and Science before Neo-Platonism.** Ptolemy; Galen; Sextus Empiricus. — Serious or frivolous, sophistry, notwithstanding its success, was unable, either by itself or with its dependencies,

<sup>1</sup> Rutherford, *The New Phrynichus*, London, 1880.

<sup>2</sup> G. Dindorf, *Pollucis Onomasticon*, 5 vols., Leipsic, 1824; Bekker, 1 vol., Berlin, 1846.

<sup>3</sup> G. Dindorf, *Harpocrationis Lexicon*, 2 vols., Oxford, 1853.

<sup>4</sup> Editions: Schweighäuser, 14 vols., Deux-Ponts, 1801-1807; G. Kaibel, 3 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1887-1890.

<sup>5</sup> Editions: Walz, *Rhetores Græci*, 9 vols., Stuttgart, 1832-1836; Spengel, *Rhetores Græci*, 3 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1853-1856; new ed., 1893.

to engage all the activity of men's minds. We have already seen moralists, thinkers, and historians, who were almost independent of it. The period produced a remarkable scientific literature and a worthy philosophy. We shall speak of each so far as each interests literary history.

Without dwelling, then, on the mathematician and philosopher Nicomachus of Gerasa, who appears to have lived at the beginning of the second century, nor on Artemidorus of Ephesus, the representative of a singularly fantastic science which was well esteemed in his day, the *Ὀνειροκρίτικον*, or interpretation of dreams, we must consider a distinguished man contemporary with Marcus Aurelius. This was the geographer, astronomer, and mathematician Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemæus) of Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> Through his *Treatise on Astronomy*, he exercised a profound influence on the science of the Middle Ages. The work has been handed down to us by the Arabs under the title of *Almagesta*. Various other works, partly preserved or lost, belong to pure science. We may still read his *Geography*, which is almost wholly filled with nomenclatures and technical terms, but from which one can get a precise and interesting body of information on the Roman world and its highways of commerce and communication.

Medicine and its allied sciences are represented at this time by men whom even literature cannot ignore. If the botanist Dioscorides of Cilicia, a contemporary of Domitian and Nerva, is known only as a collector; if the physicians Rufus and Soranus of Ephesus, Xenocrates of Aphrodisium, and Aretæus of Cappadocia are specialists,—the case is not the same with the celebrated Galen (Claudius Galenus).<sup>2</sup> He was born at Pergamon in the year 131 A.D., and educated in all the science of the time. He became a famous physician and surgeon under Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, and was almost as renowned for his talent as a lecturer and writer as for his professional knowledge. He continued to write almost to the time of his death, in 201. His works form an ample course of medicine, comprising all the medical science known in his day. Some of them, however, treat logic, morals, and even grammar. He was not a highly original thinker, but had much sense and extensive knowledge, and wrote without affectation or carelessness.

<sup>1</sup> There is no complete edition. The *Geography* is edited by Wieberg und Grashof, Essend. 1839-1845; a new edition is being published for the Didot Collection.

<sup>2</sup> Edition by Kühn, 20 vols., Leipsic, 1821-1830, in the *Opera Medicorum Græcorum*, vols. I-XX; *Scripta Minora*, 3 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1894-1896; *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, Iwan Müller, Leipsic, 1874; *Protrepticon*, Kaibel, Berlin, 1894.



The great movement of thought in this period is in philosophy proper and particularly in Neo-Platonism.

Toward the close of the second century, philosophy seemed to be in a state of semi-confusion. No longer was there any clearly defined doctrine. The old schools existed in name only, but were coming to be much like one another. Platonism and Pythagoreanism, with elements of Peripateticism and Stoicism, tended to form a mystic doctrine that awaited definite statement of itself. After Plutarch, the representatives of the tendency were obscure individuals, whose characters are to-day of interest almost solely to erudite specialists. The cynics were only a crude sect, to which a few polemics like those of Ænomaus of Gadara, at the end of the second century, could not give literary importance. About the same time, it is true, scepticism again commands attention, owing to a physician of the empirical school, who formulated and completed the creed of the sect in *Sceptic Commentaries* and *Pyrrhonic Sketches*.<sup>1</sup> It was Sextus; but his works, though still extant, do not seem to have exercised much influence on contemporary society. They are singularly fastidious; and their principal interest to us arises from their discussions and the information they give us of many opinions and theories, philosophical, mathematical, and even linguistic.

**21. Neo-Platonism: Plotinus and Porphyry.**—From the confusion there finally arose, in the third century, the remarkable doctrine called Neo-Platonism. Its real founder is Plotinus, a Greek of Egypt, who was born at Lycopolis in 204, and died at Rome in 270. A disciple of Ammonius Saccas at Alexandria, he received from him the germ of his own doctrine. By his meditations in the course of a somewhat troubled life he gradually organized the doctrine. In 244 he came to Rome to teach it there. The last twenty-six years of his life were spent in the midst of disciples who regarded him with deep veneration.

His lessons were revised in haste and reunited by his disciple Porphyry to form the *Enneades*, a series of dissertations divided into six groups of nine each.<sup>2</sup> They treated morals, the constitution and government of the world, the soul, reason, the nature of being—in a word, almost all the great problems of philosophy. Hence they constitute together a complete exposition of doctrine.

Their teaching is a mystic eclecticism, professing to be an inter-

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: J. A. Fabricius, Leipsic, 1718; Bekker, Leipsic, 1842.

<sup>2</sup> EDITIONS: Creuzer, 3 vols., Oxford, 1835; the same, Paris, Didot, 1850, with Latin translation; H. F. Müller, Berlin, 1878; Volkmann, Leipsic, 1883.

Consult: Edouard Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, vol. V; Chaignet, *Histoire de la psychologie des Grecs*, vols. IV and V, Paris, 1893.

pretation of Platonic ideas. In reality, taking those ideas as a basis, Plotinus erected a complex structure, into which he introduced as materials, elements of Pythagoreanism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and even Epicurean and Sceptic doctrines, to say nothing of personal contributions. His philosophy, in this sense, was Hellenism in its entirety. The essential feature is the conception of a God, absolutely pure, as distinct as possible from matter, and infinitely removed from the world in which we live—the world of appearances. To mount as far as possible toward Him, and, to this end, to detach oneself more and more from the ties of matter, was the real object of philosophy and the real aim of life. Asceticism is, hence, its natural and necessary form. It asks that a man deliver himself wholly to contemplation and envelops man in its mysticism.

The *Enneades*, in which these ideas were expounded, form a strange, obscure, yet influential work. Their subtle, vigorous intelligence, sustained by ardent faith, is admirable. The author's thought pierces through the most difficult problems and delights itself in abstractions. It is often difficult to follow, particularly as he scorns care for literary form; but as the dark passages in his language come to reveal their meaning, one feels respect for his lofty, vigorous, marvellously acute thinking, so untiring in the pursuit of truth. The sentiment animating the research is so noble, sincere, and passionate that one is both convinced and charmed. He exercised a strong persuasion over those whom he did not repel in the beginning. Such, too, is the effect of his work upon its readers to-day.

Neo-Platonic philosophy was a religion. Though rational in its point of departure, and in the greater part of its development, it ends in ecstasy. It appears in history as the final result of Hellenism; for it is composed of the thoughts and sentiments of the great men of Greece, and coördinates their thought into a powerful unity. Still it contains something which is the negation of their profoundest tendency, because it pretends to use reason as a means of proceeding into the unknown, and finally dispenses with reason altogether. But in this form of Neo-Platonic philosophy Hellenism stood opposed to Christianity, which was then rapidly becoming influential. Hellenism in this narrow sense is far from representing adequately the grandeur of Hellenic genius.

Porphyry, though profoundly differing from him, is inseparable from Plotinus. Plotinus lived absorbed in a single thought, to whose elaboration he devoted himself incessantly; but Porphyry was more of a scholar and many-sided writer.

He was born at Tyre in 233, met Plotinus at Rome in 263, and

attached himself to him henceforth. For six years he never left him; Plotinus, as we have seen, even commissioned him to edit his writings. After the death of his master, he lived in Sicily, then at Rome, and died early in the fourth century. He was much less original than Plotinus, but quick to comprehend, and fond of exposition. He wrote much. He was a philosopher, disputant, historian, grammarian, and mathematician; but never composed a really great work.<sup>1</sup> Among his writings, the most important, from a philosophical point of view, is the *Introduction to the Knowledge of the Intelligible*. Those which interest literature most are the *Treatise on Abstinence*, in four books, and the *Letter to Marcella*. We possess his interesting little work *On the Grotto of the Nymphs in the Odyssey*, in which allegorical interpretation gives itself free play; also some fragments of *Homeric Researches*. But in these the author appears to be a mediocre writer. None of them gives a correct idea of his importance. That is best manifested in his lost religious writings such as *On the Philosophy of the Oracles*, *On the Images of the Gods*, and the fifteen books *Against the Christians*. He was the principal defender of Hellenism, and so the principal adversary of Christianity in the third century. This phase of his work is scarcely known except from those whom he combated. From what remains, we should recognize in him a man with a talent for learning and remembering, an indefatigable worker, but a mediocre artist on the whole, who was unable to bring his product to the degree of perfection in which it would have lasting value.

**22. Rise and Expansion of Christian Literature in the Second and Third Centuries: the Apologists. The Doctors: Clement of Alexandria; Origen; Hippolytus.** — When Porphyry was combating Christianity, about two centuries and a half had passed since the new religion began to spread. But at the beginning it had almost no point of contact with Greek literature. The earliest Christian writings, even when composed in Greek, were, properly speaking, not literary. They were simple narratives, letters, instructions, which aimed only at being useful morally and propagating Christian doctrine. This does not mean, to be sure, that they lacked charm and originality. But those who composed them had no wish to be known as authors; they adhered to no Hellenic tradition and proposed to establish none. The *Gospels*, the *Epistles*, the *Acts*, have, indeed, a characteristic nature, but no point of contact with ancient or contemporary literature.

It is only in the second century, with the appearance of the apolo-

<sup>1</sup> There is no complete edition. Cf. Nauck, *Opuscula Selecta*, 2 vols., Leipzig, Teubner, 1860 and 1886.

gists, that Christian literature connected itself with Hellenic civilization. It was then rising from obscurity in many parts of the Roman Empire. It excited the wrath of the pagan populations and more still the anxiety of the imperial police. The Christians became the butt, on the one hand, of official persecution, and on the other, of malevolence and even calumny. They needed to justify themselves either as individuals or collectively. The collective justification was the work of the apologists. These were educated men, often converted pagans, who had studied in pagan schools, and generally in those of the philosophers. They brought to the composition of their apology the dialectic which they had acquired there. Hence at least one element of Greek art and Greek method put itself at the service of the new doctrines.

The apologists of the second century, however, were only mediocre writers.<sup>1</sup> Their works are more interesting for the history of ideas than for that of literary art. We may pass by Quadratus, a contemporary of Hadrian; and Aristides, who addressed his apology to the emperor Antoninus. But Justin merits more attention. He was born in Judæa about the year 100. After studying philosophy, he was converted to Christianity about 123. Then he came to Rome, where he seems to have maintained a school of Christian instruction. He was martyred there between 163 and 167. We have two of his *Apologies*, one addressed, about 150, to the emperor Antoninus, the other, coming a little later and completing the first; and also a *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*, which is a refutation of Jewish opinions respecting Christianity. The other writings attributed to him are of doubtful authenticity. As a writer, he is obscure and careless, but liberal as a thinker and a man; sometimes there is eloquence in his argument, but it has, in general, the fault of being confused. He is properly considered as the first master of Christian apologetics. After him, the type was continued by Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Aristo, Miltiades, and Irenæus. None of them had sufficient originality to make it imperative that we dwell upon his works.

About the beginning of the third century the doctors came to join the apologists; great works of instruction succeeded the writings due to the circumstances of the times. Theology made its appearance.

It arose with Clement of Alexandria.<sup>2</sup> He was born probably

<sup>1</sup> Complete edition by Th. Otto, *Corpus Apologetarum Christianorum*, 9 vols., Jena, 1842-1872. A new edition is that of Gebhardt und Harnack, mit Texten und Untersuchungen, in course of publication at Leipsic since 1882.

Consult: Krüger, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur*, Leipsic, 1895; Bardenheuer, *Patrologie*, Freiburg, 1894; P. Battifol, *Littérature grecque chrétienne*, Paris, Lecoq, 1897.

<sup>2</sup> Edition by W. Dindorf, 4 vols., Oxford, 1869. See also Eug. de Faye, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, Paris, 1898.



in Greece about 160, and seems to have settled in Egypt twenty years later. There the regular instruction of Christianity was inaugurated. In form and method the school was like those of the philosophers. It was called the catechetical school. Clement was first a student, then the master, and held the direction until about 203. Obligated to flee then from the persecution of Septimius Severus, he lived in various cities of the Orient, notably at Antioch, and probably died about 215. Besides his lost writings and a discourse of secondary importance, he wrote a course of Christian philosophy, which still exists to represent his instruction. It includes three parts: the *Exhortation* (Προτρεπτικός), the *Educator* (Παιδαγωγός), and the *Stromates* (Στρωματεῖς). A perfectly well-defined plan must not be expected; the author does not seem to have been capable of that. His genius is vigorous and subtle, but lacking in literary discipline. An outline of order suffices for him. His intention is to lead his disciple by continued progress from the first steps in Christian life to the very acme of knowledge and perfection. In the *Exhortation*, he combats paganism; in the *Educator*, he outlines Christianity; in the *Stromates*, he touches upon deep problems of theology and morals. But the division is rather apparent than real. Problems are everywhere introduced, interlaced with the rest, and even multiplied to excess. He has the merit of variety of thought, profound knowledge, and natural warmth, sometimes approaching eloquence. He is at once a pamphleteer, a doctor, and a poet. In the history of ideas, his part is that of having introduced Hellenic philosophy into Christianity, and having won acceptance for the explanations of the Alexandrian Philo.

Clement's successor was Origen,<sup>1</sup> the greatest of the Christian doctors. Born in 185 in Alexandria, he had Clement as his master, and took his place in 203. For about thirty years, notwithstanding numerous absences, he made the city the centre of his activity. Later, forced to leave, owing to a disagreement with the bishop Demetrius, he taught for a while at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, suffered various persecutions, and finally died at Tyre in 254.

He did not cease writing for a day. His work was immense, and it is in part preserved still. It consists chiefly of *Commentaries and Scholia on the Old and New Testaments* and *Homilies*. Before commenting on the texts, he edited them: his *Bible in Six Columns* (Ἑξαπλᾶ) offered readers a sure text in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. But Origen was really an exegete. Adhering to the method of Clement, though with more order, he explained allegorically almost all that he had edited. Thereby he spread more widely than Clement the ideas of

<sup>1</sup> Migne, *Patrologia Græca*, vols. XI-XVII. Paris, 1857-1860.

Greek philosophy, particularly those of Plato, in the Christian schools; and though his teaching was not wholly received by the Councils, he had great influence on the form of Christian theology. His writings show remarkable fertility of mind and breadth of view, and are easier to read than those of Clement. But they are not great as literary works; mere improvisations, they need to be condensed and subjugated to more rigorous logic. Under the name of a *Refutation of Celsus*, we have a fragment of a lengthy composition, in which he discusses the objections raised, in the second century, by the philosopher Celsus against the new religion. All this gives him a place of the first order in the history of Christianity; but in the history of Greek literature his merit is inferior, like that of all the early Christian writers.

We might join to his name that of Hippolytus, his contemporary, the author of works of Christian philosophy; and those of Methodius, Pamphilus of Cæsarea, and the chronographer Julius Sextus Africanus, without modifying this judgment. Christian literature was still in its infancy. It did not reach its mature development till the following century.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### LAST DAYS OF HELLENIC LITERATURE

1. Closing Period of Sophistry in the Fourth Century : Himerius ; Themistius ; Libanius.
2. The Emperor Julian.
3. The Last Sophists. Rhetoric, Grammar, Lexicography.
4. Profane History in the Closing Centuries.
5. Philosophy. End of Neo-Platonism. Iamblichus ; Synesius ; Proclus.
6. Poetry of the Closing Centuries. Quintus of Smyrna ; Nonnus and his School ; the *Anthology*.
7. Christian Literature : its Rise in the Fourth Century.
8. Christian Oratory : Athanasius of Alexandria.
9. The Cappadocians : Basil ; Gregory of Nazianzus ; Gregory of Nyssa.
10. John Chrysostom.
11. Close of Religious Oratory.
12. Other Christian Writers : Apologists, Scholars, and Historians.
13. Conclusion.

**1. Closing Period of Sophistry : Himerius ; Themistius ; Libanius.** — Beginning with the fourth century, it is the literature inspired by Christianity that, without contradiction, takes first rank in the Greek Orient. Profane literature did not, however, disappear at once. It continued for three or four centuries, and even shone with some brilliance in the beginning of the period.

The disturbed state of the Empire in the third century had not been very favorable to the schools. After their great prosperity in the second century, they had suffered eclipse in the age of military anarchy. When peace had been reëstablished by Diocletian, and particularly when the victory of Constantine had assured for himself and his sons the regular transmission of power, circumstances became more favorable. The schools adopted as their chief function the training of officers for the imperial administration ; and once more numerous and talented youths were seen following the instruction of masters of renown. Almost all the larger Greek cities had their groups of schools and celebrated professors. Yet the celebrity was highly artificial, like the eloquence of the orators. Eunapius, in his *Lives of the Sophists*, has preserved the names of some of these professors, with details of their personality and talent. But the only ones meriting special mention here are those whose principal works are extant, — Himerius, Themistius, and Libanius.

Himerius of Prusa taught chiefly at Athens, under Constantius, Julian, Jovian, Valens, and Theodosius, from about 350 to 386.<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Dindorf, Paris, Didot, 1849, in the volume with *Philostratorum Opera*.

had numerous disciples, including Basil of Cæsarea and Gregory of Nazianzus, who became bishops. Of his works we have some thirty discourses, in part incomplete. What he most lacked was ideas. No contemporary writer did less thinking. Oratory and practical life, as he understood them, resembled the poetry and the music of the time. The poetry was thoroughly superficial, lacking in force of sentiment; the music was caressing and monotonous, content with having charmed the ear. Imbued with the language of the poets, he readily embodied their verses in his melodious prose. Hence we owe to him paraphrases of some lost poems of Alcæus, Sappho, and Anacreon.

Themistius was more serious. He maintained a school of philosophy at Constantinople from about 350 till 395, and obtained the most brilliant success.<sup>1</sup> Before his students he commented upon the works of various philosophers; but in addition to technical instruction he loved to utter in public his smoothly flowing, sparkling periods on subjects of morality. As a senator at Constantinople, he was the orator designated to speak on all occasions of haranguing the emperors. This favor he owed to his talent, and his character enabled him to perform the task with honor. In a time of universal adulation he could speak to the emperors with dignity, and give them at times, in the form of eulogy, some useful counsel. More difficult still, in a society torn by religious discord, he kept the esteem of all, pagans and Christians, remaining faithful to Hellenism, though not attacking the new beliefs. Of his works there remain a collection of *Paraphrases of Aristotle*, whose principal merit lies in the clearness of their interpretation; and a little less than forty *Discourses* relating to various events of the time, or to his own life. His oratory generally appears soft and ornate, official and academic; but it had grace, nobility, and brilliance, and is inspired with lofty sentiments, which give it, at least in certain portions, somewhat of force.

The most illustrious of the pagan masters of the fourth century was Libanius of Antioch.<sup>2</sup> He was born in 314, and taught rhetoric to some extent at Athens, Constantinople, Nicæa, and Nicomedia, but chiefly at Antioch, where he seems to have dwelt from 354 to his death, which occurred after 391. Owing to his talent and the favor of the emperors, particularly Julian, he became one of the great personages of the Greek Orient. Far from shutting himself up in his school, he took an interest in everything. He addressed

<sup>1</sup> Themistius, *Discourses*, Dindorf, Leipsic, 1832; *Paraphrases of Aristotle*, Spengel, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1866.

<sup>2</sup> Edition by Reiske, 4 vols., Altenburg, 1791-1797.



discourses to generals, prefects, and emperors, treating the affairs of his city, and acting according to circumstances as its patron, panegyrist, counsellor, and defender. He wrote constantly and to every one, asking questions, making recommendations, or giving thanks or compliments. All that the institutions of the time allowed in the way of political activity he displayed. But he always refused public office, except the honorary dignity of *questor*, which was conferred on him by Julian.

His preserved writings are very numerous. Perhaps a third consists of models of scholastic exercises, curious specimens of the sophistry of the times. We owe to him also a *Life of Demosthenes* and a series of very useful arguments indicating the occasion and the subject of the great orator's discourses. Then we have sixty-five of his harangues — lectures and discourses of various sorts — treating in general either ethical subjects or, more often, contemporary events. The latter are the more interesting. Some disclose the manners of the schools, the rivalries of the masters, or the passions of the disciples; others give a glimpse of the life of the time, representing certain of the chief Greek cities of the Orient, their appearance, their population, their disturbances; almost all permit us to see the imperial administration at work; and several portray rather vividly the character of emperors of the period. We may mention specially the first discourse, *On my Own Fortunes*; and the second, the *Eulogy of Antioch*. To these oratorical works must be added an ample correspondence, which is no less interesting.

His misfortune lay in his opposition to the movement of his century. Popular sentiment was being alienated more and more from paganism and, by a natural consequence, fondness for profane study waned in fervor. On the contrary, being profoundly imbued with Hellenism from childhood, and devoted in his admiration for the great Greek authors, he could not understand how one should fail to find in them one's highest ideal. If he had no animosity against the Christians, many of whom were his friends, Christianity as a doctrine seemed impious, and as a form of social life, semi-barbarous. Above all, the monks, whose numbers were increasing before his eyes, were obnoxious; he saw in them the enemies of beauty, reason, and civilization. The decline of study particularly pained him, but he felt powerless to prevent it; and his talent, which, in other times would have been usefully employed in action, spent itself vainly in complaints. His ability was extolled beyond measure by the Byzantines. Really oratorical qualities, however, were mediocre in him. He had neither vigorous dialectic nor sustained passion. He confined himself to details, delighted in petty inventions, and

aimed to display his graces by a fastidious affectation. His sentences are awkward and sometimes obscure. Yet one cannot deny that he possessed spirit, imagination, subtlety of ideas, ingenious invention, and in many passages undoubted sincerity of tone.

**2. The Emperor Julian.**<sup>1</sup>—With the pagan sophistry of the fourth century is connected a remarkable man, the Emperor Julian, who towers high above it in many ways. Born in 331, he was suspected and almost proscribed by Constantius, then raised by him to the dignity of Cæsar. He became emperor in 361, and died two years later in an unfortunate campaign against the Persians. In his childhood he had been compelled against his wish to follow the teachings and education of the Christians. He secretly revolted and attached himself the more strongly to Hellenism. When he came into power, his efforts, as every one knows, tended to restore the old faith.

He studied under the rhetoricians and philosophers of his day; and their influence is found in his writings. In belief, he was Neo-Platonic; in his manner of writing, a sophist, though endowed with an original and vigorous personality. Three official discourses of his still extant (two *Panegyrics on the Emperor Constantius* and a *Eulogy of the Empress Eusebia*) show scarcely more than faithful imitation of models then fashionable. The true Julian appeared in the sincerer works of his maturity. His *Commentaries*, relating to his campaigns in Gaul, are lost. But we possess various discourses in which he reveals his sentiment, such as the *Consolations*, the *Letter to Themistius*, the oratorical hymns in prose *To the Sun King* and *To the Mother of the Gods*, curious embodiments of his religious reveries, his mystic sentimentality, and his favorite dreams. The keen, satiric tendency of his mind is manifested chiefly in his work in three books *Against the Christians*, of which only fragments remain. We see it again in all its vividness in the *Misopogon*, a polemic composed in 363 against the inhabitants of Antioch, who made him the subject of a song; and in the *Symposium* (or the *Cæsars*), a mediocre composition, in which he criticises his predecessors. The body of writings is completed by an extensive correspondence, including, unfortunately, some letters of doubtful authenticity.

As he died at the age of thirty-three, he had not the opportunity to display fully his talent. He was a thinker, historian, moralist, and satirist; but above all a man, whose human nature was revealed

<sup>1</sup> EDITIONS: Hertlein, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1875-1876; C. J. Neumann, *Juliani Imperatoris Librorum contra Christianos quæ Supersunt*, Leipsic, 1880; Bidez et Cumont, *Recherches sur la tradition manuscrite des lettres de l'Empereur Julien*, Brussels, 1898.

at every instant beneath the literary conventions of the times; even his prejudices and passions would have contributed to give him originality as a writer. He did not live long enough to free himself from the influence of his masters and fully manifest himself.

**3. The Last Sophists. Grammar, Rhetoric, Lexicography.**<sup>1</sup> — After the fifth century pagan oratory went on declining, and intellectual activity was directed more and more to the service of Christianity. Nevertheless, the schools subsisted. The masters were often Christians, yet their instruction was still wholly secular and traditional. But it grew ever more commonplace, void of ideas, and sterile.

At the beginning of the fifth century a pupil of Libanius, the rhetorician Aphthonius, published his *Preparatory Exercises*, the last product of Greek rhetoric. Then appeared a swarm of commentators, who wearied themselves with their continual repetitions. In the fifth century a school of some renown, that of Gaza, attained a reputation which lasted into the next century. Its best-known representative is Coricius, the foremost secular orator in the time of Justin and Justinian. Some of his *Declamations and Discourses* are extant, but we find in them little more than an empty, pretentious eloquence.

After him, there are no other names to cite. Everything declined in the eastern part of the Empire, owing to barbarian invasions and unhappy religious quarrels. Sophistry was in its death-throes. It is the period of the romances already touched upon. It is that, too, of collections of fictitious letters, among which it will suffice to mention that of Aristænetus, a mediocre imitator of Alciphron.

Strictly grammatical erudition was then represented chiefly by lexicographers, of whom we need not speak in detail. We may mention simply Orion and Hesychius of Alexandria. The *Etymological Lexicon* of the former is lost; but it seems to be the source of the leading *Etymologica* of the Middle Ages, which are still extant. Of the latter we have a *Glossary*, important chiefly because it has preserved many of the rare words employed by the poets, and sometimes effaced or replaced in our manuscripts by unfaithful copyists. Beside the lexicons must be placed *Florilegia* of thoughts and choice passages. The only work of the kind preserved in anything like completeness is that of John of Stobæa in Macedon, commonly called Stobæus, who seems to have lived in the sixth century. His *Florilegium* has preserved from annihilation numerous pages of the ancient authors.<sup>2</sup>

**4. Profane History in the Closing Centuries.**<sup>3</sup> — We dismissed historical writing when it was again attaining some merit at the hands

<sup>1</sup> See the collections of the *Rhetores Græci*, p. 530, n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Edition by Wachsmuth u. Hense, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1884-1895.

<sup>3</sup> We can only refer the reader to C. Müller, *Fr. Hist. Gr.*, and Dindorf, *Hist. Græc. Minores*, *sup. cit.*

of the historians of the second and third centuries. In the following period, it did not cease to be cultivated and held in esteem. But apparently, firm and lofty qualities of judgment were wanting more and more in its devotees. After passing through the schools of rhetoric, they almost all wrote, in pretentious language, simple chronicles; or else, by a tendency no less mischievous, allowed history to degenerate into panegyric.

In the fourth century the glory of Constantine and his sons was extolled by a number of rhetorical historians, such as Praxagoras of Athens and Bearchius of Cæsarea. Eunapus of Sardis, who is better known (346–414 approximately), wrote an account of the events of his age (270–404), reserving the place of honor for Julian. The fragments which remain give but an incomplete idea of it. No doubt there was manifest a pronounced party tendency. As a militant pagan, he criticised men and things from the point of view of a passionate believer. His bombastic rhetoric only disclosed the natural mediocrity of his mind. Besides his history, he wrote, under the title of *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, twenty-three biographies still in existence. They are those of the leading representatives of Neo-Platonism, his teachers or friends, and of some rhetoricians of the time. Although the book affords us information of value, we must own frankly that it has neither composition, criticism, nor style.

The history of Eunapus was continued by Olympiodorus early in the fifth century, and was then taken up about the middle of the same century by Zosimus, fiscal attorney and count of the Palace under Theodosius II and his successors. His *New History* (*Ἱστορία νέα*) is still in existence. It is occupied chiefly with the recent reigns, the author having been content, for the earlier ones, to abridge Eunapus. He stopped at 410, with the capture of Rome by Alaric. He wished to do the work of a philosophic historian by explaining the manifest decadence of the Roman power. In fact, he scarcely realized his design. The great events, the movements of public opinion, and the thorough transformations of society, escaped him. Superstitiously attached to polytheism like Eunapus, he judged important questions from the narrow point of view of a partisan. But his work does have some merit. Clear and judicious in detail and full of facts, it is sincere, lucidly written, and exempt from prolixity and bad taste.

Without pausing to consider the secondary historians of the close of the fifth century, such as Priscus and Malchus, we may pass from Zosimus to the historians of the sixth century, chief among whom is Procopius.<sup>1</sup> He was born at Cæsarea in Palestine, but lived chiefly

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Dindorf, Bonn, 1833–1838.



at Constantinople, where he held high offices under Justinian. He died not long after 562. His great historical work is the eight books *On the Wars of Justinian's Reign*, completed in 554. After 558, he published a second work in six books *On the Buildings of Justinian*. The two works, though valuable, are faulty, resembling a continuous panegyric. Under Justinian, no one could speak the simple truth in public. Procopius got his revenge in a *Secret History*, probably not published till later. It is a bitter polemic severely lashing those whom the author had praised most in his public writings, Justinian and Theodora, Belisarius and Antonina. Here he seems to be merely repeating what was said quietly in the well-informed circles of Byzantium. The three works, considered together, have undoubted value. The author, a man of experience, anxious to be well informed, and gifted with sound judgment, had the skill to make the society of his time seem to live in accounts and descriptions which we can still read with interest.

In a group with him may be placed those who continued his work, Agathias of Myrina, Menander the Protector (body-guard), and Theophylactus Simocattes; then John Laurentius, called the Lydian, author of a lost *History*, and of three extant treatises *On the Months*, *On the Roman Magistracies*, and *On Celestial Signs*—works of confused erudition, yet of high documentary value.

Later on we find only chroniclers worthy of less and less attention. They can almost be classed with the obscure Byzantine annalists. The last one, John Malalas, a monk of the eighth century, is already a Byzantine.

The geographers of the time after Ptolemy have really no place in a history of literature. Perhaps only Stephen of Byzantium, who lived probably in the fifth century, deserves mention.<sup>1</sup> His *Ethnica* is an ample collection of notes on historical geography in some sixty books. We have only an abridgment of it.

**5. Philosophy. End of Neo-Platonism.** Iamblichus; Synesius; Proclus. — After Porphyry and the immediate disciples of Plotinus, the Neo-Platonic school devoted itself more and more to the fantasies of a mystic theology.

In the first half of the fourth century, its chief was Iamblichus<sup>2</sup> of Chalcis in Syria, an enthusiastic dreamer and subtle metaphysician, adored by his disciples as a supernatural being, working prodigies, commanding demons, and conversing with the gods. He lived in various places, principally in Syria, from about 280 till about 350,

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Dindorf, Leipsic, 1824; Westermann, Leipsic, 1835; Meineke, Berlin, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> The chief works of Iamblichus have been edited for the Teubner Collection.

writing much, though without concern for form. He was far from being an original thinker, his chief task being to adapt the doctrines of his predecessors to the needs of his cult. Among his lost works, the most important is that on *Chaldaic Theology*, which he pretended to make one of the sources of his doctrine. We have some writings of his relative to Pythagoras and his teaching. Most of them are composed of mystic dissertations on the science of numbers. If he has a place in literary history, it is because he represents, better than any one else, the state of mind of some of his contemporaries. Hellenism became with him an ethereal religion, whose devotees were more and more detached from terrestrial concerns and lived wholly in the supernatural.

This Syrian school disappeared after the reign of Julian. But in the fifth century, we again find Neo-Platonism flourishing, particularly at Athens and Alexandria.

Certain teachers attained fame at Alexandria not only as philosophers but even more as mathematicians. Among them is Hypatia, a woman whose teaching was very successful, but who left no written works. She was killed in 415 by a fanatic mob that saw in her an enemy of Christianity. To this school can be assigned Synesius of Cyrene,<sup>1</sup> a pupil of Hypatia. Born about 370, he was first a philosopher, then a Christian, who travelled some, but retired early to his own country, where he possessed vast estates. He gradually inclined toward Christianity. Even before he received baptism, a popular vote had named him bishop of Ptolemais. As metropolitan of the Cyrenaic *pentapolis*, though surrounded by difficulties, he administered it wisely and courageously, and died there in 413. The letters he has left are an interesting document concerning his personality and time; though not exempt from artificial rhetoric, they have some charm. We have also other writings of his, including a sophistic *Eulogy of Baldness*, various harangues and treatises, a philosophic dialogue entitled *Dio*, which is one of his best works, and some *Homilies and Discourses*, which come from the period of his episcopate. In these lofty compositions there is dignity, authority, and gravity of tone, though with too much poetic color; while in the familiar compositions, his style, though somewhat conventional, is not without grace. To his literary prose must be added six hymns in the Doric dialect, and in Anacreontic or logaëdic metres. In some the author, still a pagan, expresses himself in

<sup>1</sup> Complete edition by Petau, with a Latin translation, Paris, 1612 and 1633; *Patrologia Græca* by Migne, vol. LXVI; Krabinger, *Synesii Cyrenæi Orationes et Homiliarum Fragmenta*, Landshut, 1850; the *Letters* in *Epistolographi Græci*. Hercher (Didot Collection); the *Hymns* in Christ und Paronikas, *Anthologia Græca Carminum Christianorum*, Leipsic, 1871.

dreams of Neo-Platonic metaphysics; in others, having become a Christian, he changes his dogma without changing tone. Christian or pagan, all his poetry is mediocre. In the fifth century, the Neo-Platonic school of Alexandria was continued by Hierocles, whose interesting commentary on the *Golden Words* of Pythagoras we possess; then by various commentators of Plato and Aristotle, such as Hermias and Ammonius. In the sixth century we still meet with commentators of those philosophers, Olympiodorus and David the Armenian. Later the school vanished — we do not know just when.

It is at Athens that the fortunes of Neo-Platonism must be followed after the fifth century. There the teaching of the doctrine was revived after the close of the fourth century, by Nestorius and Plutarch, the latter of whom died in 431. His successors were Syrianus and Proclus, the last great representatives of the Neo-Platonic school.

Proclus<sup>1</sup> was born at Constantinople in 410 and taught at Athens for almost fifty years, from about 438 till his death in 485. Like all the later Neo-Platonists, he wrote as if inspired; but to the inspiration he added vast learning and a veritable gift of organization. Many of his works are lost. There remain, however, various *Commentaries on Dialogues of Plato*, several philosophic essays, and six *Hymns*, the remnants of a more extensive poetic collection, in which he piously expressed sentiments of devotion. To him is attributed also, though doubtfully, a commentary on the *Works* of Hesiod, and a *Chrestomathy*. His part is very important in the history of Neo-Platonism. Without essentially adding anything, he completed and finished its organization. But his literary merit is mediocre. A mere visionary dialectician, he expressed some dry thoughts that resemble algebraic formulas. His work is an obscure mathematics, and still worse, is based often on the "void."

In completing Neo-Platonism and enclosing it in a rigorous frame, he made it inert and incapable of life. — made scholasticism of it. After his death, the school languished till its complete disappearance. In the sixth century, we find nothing at Athens or Alexandria but commentators or interpreters. The best known are Damascius, author of *Problems and Solutions*; and Simplicius, to whom we owe, among other works, a commentary on the *Manual* of Epictetus. In 529 an edict of Justinian closed the schools at Athens. The proscribed philosophers retired to Persia. They returned a little later, and the doctrine continued in their hands for almost another century, growing more and more unimportant. The

<sup>1</sup> Edition of his works by V. Cousin, 6 vols., Paris, 1820-1827 and 1864. English translation by Taylor, 4 vols., London, 1816-1820.

upper classes of society were fast being won to Christianity. Non-Christian philosophy became impossible in the Greek world. The remnants of Neo-Platonism filtered in and were lost in Byzantine theology.

**6. Poetry of the Closing Centuries.** **Quintus of Smyrna; Nonnus and his School; the *Anthology*.** — Before leaving pagan literature, a few words must be said about poetry, which lived side by side with sophistry in these later centuries, was nourished from the same sources, and disappeared with it. Only two of its types, the epic and the lyric poem, showed any real vitality after the second century had passed.

The epic of the day was purely the work of the schools. Its life was one of memory and imitation. Quintus of Smyrna, a little-known poet, is placed by conjecture in the fourth century, and has left us a heroic poem entitled *After Homer* (Τὰ μεθ' Ὅμηρον).<sup>1</sup> He reports, in the fashion of the cyclic poets and mythographers, the events from the death of Hector to the capture of Troy and the return of the Greeks. His epic is refined, and correct in order and versification, but without poetic originality. A little later appeared a much more important poet, Nonnus of Panopolis in Egypt, who was almost the originator of a school in the beginning of the fifth century. He seems to have lived at Alexandria. In the early years of Constantine, apparently, he composed there an immense mythological epic in forty-eight cantos — the *Dionysiaca*.<sup>2</sup> As early as the third century, the legend of Bacchus had been put into epic form by another Egyptian Greek, Soterichus of Oasis, in his *Bassarica*. Nonnus, an ambitious, exaggerative writer, while treating the subject anew, gave it an unparalleled length, and seems to have regarded the achievement as a token of force and grandeur. The central thought is the expedition of Bacchus against the Indians. About this theme are grouped episodes without number. The mass of poetry, which seems formidable to-day to the most intrepid readers, shows in its author an interesting mixture of good qualities and marked defects. He had real force of invention, an imagination sometimes vigorous, and a remarkable instinct for the music of verse. He spoiled these gifts by pompous declamation, puerile bombast, and fine writing. His style is inflated, empty, and singularly obscure. His versification is enslaved to rules that he himself created, and seems monotonous and artificial. Becoming a Christian, he composed a *Paraphrase of the Gospel of St. John* in verse. It is little more than an exercise in prosody.

<sup>1</sup> Editions by Lehrs, Paris, Didot, 1839, in the volume with Hesiod; and by Zimmermann, Leipsic, Teubner, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> Edition by Köchly, 2 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1857.



Such as he was, he had his followers. The reform in versification which he introduced was popular. His influence over almost all succeeding poets is manifest. We may name without emphasis the principal ones, such as Tryphiodorus,<sup>1</sup> whose *Capture of Ilium* we have, a dry, frigid work in about seven hundred verses, with no other merit than elegance of form; Coluthus<sup>2</sup> of Lycopolis in Egypt, to whom we owe a brief, insignificant epic on the *Rape of Helen*; and Musæus,<sup>3</sup> the author of the pretty poem entitled *Hero and Leander*, a simple love-tale in three hundred verses, resembling both Alexandrian epic and contemporary romance.

In a class by themselves must be placed the Orphic poems;<sup>4</sup> but we need not dwell long on them. They are all connected with a mystic movement of ideas known as Orphism, which began with the sixth century B.C., and seems to have lasted almost as long as paganism, though with various transformations. Some of the poems have an epic form. Such is the Orphic *Argonautica*, assigned by conjecture to the fourth century. In this poem the Orphic tendency is least noticeable. The Orphic *Theogony*, now lost, also belonged to the group; and there were hymns, to which it is almost impossible to assign a definite date. They excite more interest on account of their obscure formulas than on account of any literary merit. To the same class, if not the same species, must be assigned the *Sibylline Books*, which are merely worth a mention.

The lyric poetry of the imperial period scarcely appeared save in the form of epigrams or songs. The ode proper, indeed, still had an official existence; but its extant remains scarcely merit a mention. The *Hymn to Nemesis* by Mesomedes, a freedman of Hadrian, and the two hymns of Dionysius of Alexandria, an unknown poet, *To the Muse Calliope* and *To Apollo*, have a place only in the history of music. But the epigram and the song produced works of real value. Indeed, in this society so fond of pretty sayings there were in all periods attractive and ingenious epigrammatists. Toward the close of Hellenism, we find more of them than ever. At the court of Arcadius, and above all, a century later, in that of Anastasius, Justin, and Justinian, they found favor. Agathias, already named as a historian, Macedonius, Paul the Hermit, and many others attained distinction among the cultured men of the sixth century. A collection of choice works of theirs is found to-day in the so-called *Palatine Anthology*. It is a collection of epigrams for which the only manuscript formerly belonged to the Palatine Library at

<sup>1</sup> Edition by Lehrs, Paris, Didot, 1839, in the volume with Hesiod.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Editions by Lehrs, *ibid.*; and Dilthey, Bonn, 1874.

<sup>4</sup> Abel, *Orphica*, Leipsic, Schenkl, 1885.

Heidelberg. Its kernel was formed in the tenth century by Constantine Cephalas, and completed in the fourteenth by the monk Planudes. It incorporated previous collections of the same nature, the *Crown* of Meleager, a collection by Philip, one by Strato, the *Cycle* of Agathias, and others, all of which it has preserved for us. At present, therefore, it is a selection of choice extracts, in which we can study one form of the polite literature of antiquity.

The collection of poems called *Anacreontics*<sup>1</sup> enables us to view another form. It contains brief songs which, since they celebrate in general wine and love, must have been composed for festive reunions. Their title comes from their being written in the spirit of Anacreon and to some extent in the form he used. The collection has been several times enlarged. As a whole, it represents the imperial period down to the Byzantine Middle Ages.

**7. Christian Literature: its Rise in the Fourth Century.**—The various products of Greek intellect which we have passed in review in the early part of this chapter have all shown marks of extreme decadence. It would seem, if one considered them alone, that, after the fourth century, the productive power of Hellenism had been quite exhausted. Yet this is not true. Greek Christianity at this time, while adhering more or less to the old culture, was producing remarkable works of its own. We must explain the difference, and give some idea of this rich productivity, at least in so far as it comes within our sphere.

As we have seen, Christianity was indebted to Greek civilization for its knowledge of history and the ideas and methods of its philosophy. It had scorned art — strict art — as unworthy. Things changed in the fourth century; for the fabric of its theology was almost finished, and it received official recognition. It came out of its secluded halls to bask in the sunlight. Its representatives were no longer teachers with an isolated group of pupils, as Clement and Origen had been, but bishops proclaiming the doctrines of the church before every rank and class of society. Their public wanted to be charmed and captivated. And the masters, educated in pagan schools, applied to their instruction the precepts that had been taught there. Art, though exhausted in the schools, had a new lease of life in the Christian churches, where its task was the propagating of new ideas and sentiments. The bishops of the fourth century were forced by circumstances to perform an important work in the world. Owing either to paganism, which was always ready to revive, or to Arianism, which almost tore the Christian community to pieces, they needed to discuss grave questions before the

<sup>1</sup> Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*, III. Cf. *supra*, p. 122.

emperors and their representatives. Oratory had grown effeminate in the schools, but regained its force when it became an instrument of action once again. This was revealed in moral discourses like those of Chrysostom, which were ardent polemics, sustained with apostolic zeal, in the name of an imperious creed. It was chiefly by brilliance in public address that Greek Christianity obtained a place in literature. But this was not all. What had been gloriously achieved was worth recounting. The new religion had its historians, very inferior, indeed, to its controversialists and orators, yet worthy of esteem. But their work was short-lived. What may be called the literary force of Christianity was soon exhausted, — partly because the best thoughts, once having found expression, could only be repeated, and this gave rise to a commonplace, mediocre routine, baleful to originality; and partly because two things destructive of oratory were developed in the Orient. These were a fondness for vain disputes, for eristic subtleties without real value; and an ascetic, or monastic, tendency which could end only in scorn of art. Then, too, Christian literature, being under the necessity of patterning after the masterpieces of paganism, naturally declined as men became alienated from the civilization of antiquity.

These reflections will enable us better to understand the evolution of the principal types which we must now consider.

**8. Christian Oratory: Athanasius of Alexandria.** — Let us go at once to oratory, without being too rigorous about chronology; for oratory is the principal element of Greek Christianity that has a place in literature.<sup>1</sup>

It arose almost at once in the first half of the fourth century. The immediate occasion for its rise was the opposition of Arianism. Christian theology, fitted by the doctors of the preceding century to deal with the most difficult problems, was brought by the Arian controversy to define its fundamental dogma, the divinity of Christ. Men's passions entered with their ideas into the discussion. The world was stirred; men of high character received a moral shock that brought into play all the resources of their genius. The Council of Nicæa in 325 formulated the dogma of consubstantiality; and this marks a date in literary, as well as in religious, history.

The most illustrious defender of orthodoxy in these fierce struggles was Athanasius of Alexandria.<sup>2</sup> Born in that city about 295, he devoted himself while yet young to the service of the church. A simple priest at the Council of Nicæa, whither he had accompanied his bishop, he already played, at thirty years of age, a part

<sup>1</sup> Consult: Villemain, *L'Eloquence chrétienne au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle*.

<sup>2</sup> Edition in Migne, *Patrologia Græca*, XXV-XXVIII.

of the first importance. In 328 he became himself bishop of Alexandria. From that time till his death, in 373, his life was one of incessant agitation. Mingling with zeal in the struggles of the day, he was subject to their alternatives of fortune, triumphing when orthodoxy triumphed, cast down and proscribed when Arianism had the upper hand. Three times he was exiled or obliged to flee. He returned three times to his metropolis, where he exercised a sort of royalty, owing to the number and enthusiasm of his partisans. Never did party chief consecrate his energy more zealously. His life was all activity and combat.

The same is true of his oratory. His principal writings, the only ones we need to notice here, are apologies or more or less passionate attacks. We may cite the *Discourse against the Gentiles*, a work of his youth; the four *Discourses against the Arians*, written in the desert between 356 and 361, while the author was proscribed; the *Apology to the Emperor Constantius*, of the year 357; his *Apology for the Flight*, probably of 358; with the *Biography of Saint Anthony* and the *History of the Arians*, which seem to come from the same time.

His inspiration is a profound, ardent, unswerving orthodoxy. Instead of broadening, making flexible, and varying the creed, he contracted it and made it rigid. His activity tended to constitute a formula so fixed and precise that it excluded henceforth all scope for thought. In this particular it resembled Judaism more than Greek philosophy. Yet his theology was largely Platonic in origin, and his dialectic still more so. His oratory followed the best classic models. He was a man of skilful and strong eloquence, proceeding always toward its goal. Without the elegant precision of the Attic orators, he resembled them in being preoccupied with facts needing explanation or theses needing proof. His language is simple, sound, rather unvaried, and moderately figurative, but clear, and suited to the case. With commendable discretion, it attracts little attention to itself, but retiringly puts itself at the service of the thought. Its great defect, in common with all Christian literature, is that of a conglomerate and slightly artificial language, in which expressions of Biblical origin appear side by side with others of Hellenic descent, without being thoroughly fused.

**9. The Cappadocians: Basil; Gregory of Nazianzus; Gregory of Nyssa.** — In Athanasius, Christian oratory reached its best. During the second half of the century, it tended, in the discourses of the Cappadocians, to mingle with its force a certain sweetness, grace, brilliant elegance, and charm. The great Cappadocians are Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus — and with them we may associate, though his rank is inferior, Gregory of Nyssa.



Basil,<sup>1</sup> sometimes called the Great, was born at Cæsarea in Cappadocia in 331. His father, a Christian, was a teacher of rhetoric, and gave him his first lessons. He went to Constantinople and Athens to complete his studies. Here he listened to Himerius, then at the height of his renown, and to Libanius, who was commencing his sophistic career. He caught a glimpse of the young Emperor Julian, and formed a close friendship with Gregory of Nazianzus, whom he had already known in Cappadocia. From 359 to 364 he resided in the Orient, an ardent devotee of asceticism. He visited Syria and Egypt in order to observe their forms of monastic life, and later organized his own monastic system in Pontus. In 364, ordained a minister by the bishop of Cæsarea, he became his assistant and counsellor; and in 370 succeeded him. From that time, as metropolitan of Cappadocia and exarch of Pontus, he administered for eight years an arduous sovereignty amidst struggles and dangers. Now energetic, now politic, he yielded or resisted according to circumstances. After the death of Athanasius, in 373, he became the real pillar of orthodoxy in the Orient. Worn out by toil, he died, still young, in 379.

Among his writings the most interesting are his *Homilies* and his *Letters*. Like Athanasius, though to a greater degree, he was an orator by temperament; but as his nature was richer and more flexible, and his pagan education more prolonged, he had much greater variety as an orator. However diverse the forms of his eloquence, one always finds it marked, on the one hand, by easy erudition and refinement, and on the other, by persuasive force and charm. These latter qualities are due to clearness, ingenious and pleasing invention, keen intelligence, lively imagination, warmth of spirit, and natural propagandism. Nurtured on Greek philosophy, particularly the doctrines of Plato and Plotinus, he made them serve him instead of being dependent on them, giving them dexterously and with sound sense a Christian form of statement. He had all the merits of a theologian; and in the most abstract matters he had a truly Hellenic facility of expression. But it was chiefly in discourse that his best qualities appeared. His *Hexameron*, a series of familiar conversations on the work of the six days of Genesis, has justly been considered a masterpiece of its kind. However strange certain physical theories announced in it may seem, the discourses have a charm that has never disappeared. His instruction to young people

<sup>1</sup> Edition in Migne, *Patr. Græc.* XXIX-XXXII.

Consult: Bardenhewer, Battifol, *sup. cit.*; Fialon, *Étude historique et littéraire sur Saint Basile*, 2d ed., Paris, 1869; A. Jahn, *Basilius Plotinians*, Berne, 1839; L. Roux, *Étude sur la prédication de Basile le Grand*, Strassburg, 1837.

*On the Reading of Profane Authors* is a delicate, graceful work, animated with a spirit of justice to antiquity, though containing certain narrow views. His moral discourses show a sincere spirit, ardent and generous, gentle and indulgent, despite their vehemence. The collection of his *Letters* merits notice as well for its historical as for its literary importance.

His style, though bearing the marks of the time, is masterly. He has good classic methods of expression and they do not hamper him; his imitation is natural and does not thwart the originality of his genius. There is nothing artificial or frivolous in his manner. Empty virtuosity is absent from his writing. However complaisant, he is at the same time grave and sincere. Among the Christian writers of his day, he is one of the simplest, yet the noblest in his simplicity.

Gregory of Nazianzus<sup>1</sup> is inseparable from him, being bound to him by a tender and unalterable friendship. But they differed in character and in bent of mind. Basil was a man of action, whom solitude sometimes charmed but could not long retain; Gregory was meditative and fond of the silent retreat. He sometimes reluctantly devoted himself to action to obey his conscience, but action soon wearied him.

Born near Nazianzus in Cappadocia, about 338, he attended first the schools of Cæsarea, where he met Basil; then those of Palestine and Egypt; and finally those of Athens, where the friendship with Basil was sealed. Like him, he learned there to love the classic poets and prose-writers. After his return to Cappadocia, when he was about thirty, he thought only of living in solitude. At the instance of his father, the bishop of Nazianzus, he was made priest in 361; Basil made him bishop of Sasima in 371; and three years later he succeeded his father in the episcopal chair of Nazianzus, having long been his coadjutor. The wish for retreat took possession of him again after another year, however; and for four years he lived as a hermit at Seleucia in Isauria. In 379, the year of Basil's death, an unexpected election brought him to Constantinople to oppose the Arians, who were predominant there. The ecumenical council of 381 had selected him to occupy the metropolitan chair. But the election was contested. In discouragement, he resigned the same year, and returned to Nazianzus. Remaining two years, he reorganized the Christian community, and then put it again into the hands of a new bishop. He himself retired definitely from active life. His last years were spent on his estate at Arrianus, where he was born, and where he died, about 390.

<sup>1</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* XXV-XXVIII.

His work is composed of discourses, letters, and poems. The extant discourses number forty-five. The most important are the *Apology for the Flight to Pontus* (probably written in 262); the two discourses *Against Julian*, composed soon after the death of the prince who had so long striven to restore polytheism; the *Funeral Oration of Athanasius* (373); the *Funeral Oration of Basil* (379); the five *Discourses on Theology* (379-381); and the *Farewell Address*, which he pronounced on leaving Constantinople. The *Letters* number two hundred and forty-three. Almost all belong to the period of retreat with which his life was closed. They touch but rarely on events of the day, but are interesting for the intimate knowledge they give concerning the man himself. The *Poems* were likewise composed principally toward the close of his life. Modern editors have made two groups of them: Theological Poems and Historical Poems. The former deals, as the title indicates, with the religious problems discussed in the circle of his acquaintances; the latter with various circumstances of his life.

Gregory was first of all a recluse, impressionable, precise, and highly introspective. Hence the charm of certain of his poems, though they all have too little poetic fire. Notwithstanding his amiable sincerity, his ready sensibility, his charming imagination, he is mediocre; his poetry is abstract and too much like discourse. Only as an orator is he incontestably original.

His oratory is less simple than that of Basil and more incisive and harmonious. It soars more and seeks more diligently to shine with brilliance. A pupil of Himerius, he kept, even as a Christian, the liking of his master for fine periods, antitheses, and ingenious, brilliant comparisons. Whether consciously or not, there is always affectation in his art. He readily employs figures for their effect; he develops and organizes his sentence like an artist, for the ear as well as for the intelligence. Ample, easy discourse did not displease him; and sometimes he has more ornament than solidity. Yet under the somewhat artificial form, he has a natural power which it is impossible to gainsay.

No one could be more sincerely impressed than he with the doctrines and sentiments that he undertook to interpret. A Christian in the depths of his heart, with fervent exaltation, he put lyric poesy into his dialectic unconsciously. Dogma and its abstractions did not repel him; for he was truly Greek in the subtlety of his intelligence. He was fond of simple, precise formulas, which would renew the idea while elucidating it. Among his abstractions, however, he introduced a full measure of the love he had in his heart and the grace that governed his imagination. Natural enthusiasm carried him high and

far. He excelled in the ample development of simple themes. With the basis of thought remaining the same, he erected a structure of sentiments and images whose shades he never wearied of varying.

Below these two great names must be placed that of Basil's brother Gregory, bishop of Nyssa.<sup>1</sup> Rather a theologian than an orator or a writer, he is really important in ecclesiastical history, but less so in the history of literature. He was born about 340. In part brought up by Basil, his brother, who was ten years his senior, he was appointed by him to be bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia. There he had to struggle energetically against the Arians, who even drove him from his seat; but he returned in 378. His importance became greater in the succeeding years. At the Council of Constantinople, in 381, he was one of the most influential theologians in the Orient; and under the reign of Theodosius he continued to be an authority in matters of orthodoxy. At length he disappeared, and we know nothing of his latest years.

His numerous writings are mostly exegetical. But we have some fifty discourses of his. Some are on dogma; most of them treat morals; and a few are panegyrics. The latter include the *Eulogy of Basil* and the *Eulogy of Macrina*, Basil's sister. His reputation is based principally on his dogmatic works. He is probably the most philosophic theologian of the day, having the greatest fondness of all for research, and thinking most logically and with the greatest breadth. He was the most fertile, too, in original views. As an orator, he had the faults of his time much more than Basil, or even Gregory of Nazianzus, as his oratory is much less spontaneous.

**10. John Chrysostom.**<sup>2</sup>—After Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, Christian oratory made no essential progress; yet it grew more abundant, owing to the character of an exceptional man, who lacked none of the gifts that mark an orator of the first class.

John, later surnamed Chrysostom (Gold-mouth), was born at Antioch, about 345, and came of a wealthy and estimable family. He was reared by his mother, who sent him to the schools of his native city. There he studied philosophy and rhetoric, the latter under Libanius, then the most famous teacher of the Orient. While still young, after gaining some success as a lawyer and in society, he was converted to asceticism. He studied theology with the masters

<sup>1</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* XLIV–XLVI.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* XLVII–LXIV; Dübner, *Opera Selecta*, I, Paris, Didot, 1861.

Consult: A. Neander, *Der heilige Johannes Chrysostomus und die Kirche*, Berlin, 1821, 3d ed., 1858; Aug. Thierry, *Saint Jean Chrysostome et l'Impératrice Eudoxie*, Paris, 2d ed., 1874; A. Puech, *Saint Jean Chrysostome et les mœurs de son temps*, Paris, 1891; the same, *Saint Jean Chrysostom*, Paris, Lecoffre, 1899.



of Antioch, notably Diodorus, then lived a few years in retreat. Recalled in 381, he was ordained a priest in 386; then for ten years, as a zealous collaborator of Bishop Flavianus, he acted as minister of the gospel in his native city with constant success. During this period, in 387, in connection with the uprising that exposed Antioch to the anger of Theodosius, he had occasion to pronounce his most celebrated discourses. In 397 his renown had spread far and wide, so that Eutropus, who then governed the feeble Emperor Arcadius, secured his election to the metropolitan chair of Constantinople. This was done to throw him into the midst of difficulties that should overwhelm him. His nature, ardent even to imprudence, his simple, courageous persistence, his sincerity, and even his oratory, brought him into conflict with certain of the upper clergy and soon with the court. A violent opposition was organized at the instigation of Theophilus, metropolitan of Alexandria, sustained by the Empress Eudoxia. John was denounced, accused, betrayed, and deposed in 403 by the synod of bishops, his enemies, in the Conventicle of the Oak, held on an estate of this name near Chalcedon. Arcadius exiled him; but soon after, frightened by the opposition of the people, and greatly disturbed by an earthquake, he recalled him. The exiled man returned in triumph; but his victory was of short duration. Some months after, in the same year, 403, a violent conflict broke out anew between him and the court. About the middle of 404, he was seized by force and carried into exile, this time permanently. For three years he was transferred from place to place in Asia Minor. Finally, in 407, worn out with fatigue and suffering, but neither vanquished nor discouraged, he died, still a prisoner, at Comana in Cappadocia.

The large collection of his writings includes treatises, discourses, and letters; we can give here only an outline of their nature.

The most celebrated treatises are the three books *Against the Adversaries of Monastic Life*, composed about 375; the discourses of consolation, *To Stappyrus*, the six books *On the Priesthood*, published in 381 and properly regarded as one of his best works; and the interesting *Essays* which he wrote at Constantinople on various points of ecclesiastical discipline. The discourses include rather numerous *Homilies*, in which he comments on texts of the Old and New Testaments; and some sermons relative to various events of the time, such as that *On the Statues*, pronounced at Antioch after the uprising, and those which he delivered before the people of Constantinople (*On Eutropus*, in 398, *Before the Departure for Exile*, in 403, and *After the Return*, a few weeks later). His letters, two

hundred and thirty-eight in number, almost all come from the time of his exile. They show under the noblest aspect his character as an exile, equally incapable of yielding or of hatred.

In this immense work, he did very little for theology proper, but much for morals. As a moralist and an orator, he has his place in literary history.

What strikes one at first in his oratory is the vivid representation of the manners and conditions of the time. No Christian orator was in such constant touch with reality. At Antioch and at Constantinople, he never ceased to watch with steadfast look for aught that might stand in the way of the sanctification he had in view, whether in the individual, the family, or society; and as his frankness equalled his insight, he told with the liberty of an apostle all that, with a censor's zeal, he had discovered. Hence almost all the society of the times lives in his portrayals. We see its wanton vices assuming oriental phases — fondness of pleasure, passion for games and spectacles, love of luxury, the haughtiness of wealth; and we discover, with no less interest, more individual traits, like the frivolity of religious congregations, the easy life of certain members of the clergy, the solicitations and intrigues of women, and the malevolent stories that circulated even in Christian communities. His bold and varied portrayals seem to be really faithful. The orator evinces neither a fondness for exaggerated expression, nor a seeking after wit. What he says is precise: taking his auditors to witness, he puts before their eyes things which it is their duty to confess.

But the moralist is not content with mere descriptions: he reasons, and that with a logical insight which is never embarrassed nor led astray. His reasoning is cogent, and his descriptions are precise and striking. He divines men's pretexts, analyzes them, and puts them in their full force, that he may refute them more completely. His search for weak reasons is the occasion for the constant discovery of new aspects of the subject. When he deals squarely with an obstinate habit, he does not dismiss it before he has shown all its phases and pointed out all its consequences. What he says is so simple that it seems to arise, one might say, only from good sense and good faith. Yet on looking closer, one sees that, with the good sense and good faith, there is delicate experience, clear insight, and wise prudence; and it becomes evident how much his views harmonize with one another. It is true that, at bottom, his morals are often puritanical and even narrow. But with his exaggeration of asceticism, it represents an ideal which has wielded a strong influence during and since his time, and which proceeds, beyond doubt, from an admirable mind.

His eloquence, at any rate, commands our admiration. Few men have shown an oratorical power so spontaneous and strong; yet few have cultivated it more assiduously. He added education to natural gifts; and it brought into his art the best elements of classic culture.

All his discourses are remarkable for their argumentation. Like every great orator, he felt the need and the wish for demonstration. Dialectic was in a way the natural exercise of his thought. One may find sometimes that he misuses it, with a sort of unconscious display of his resources, in which is manifested the influence of sophistic; but this is exceptional. Ordinarily the arguments are sound, founded either on the beliefs of the orator and his public, or on experience and reason; and they are produced with extraordinary abundance. Every important point is taken up and the demonstration proceeds steadily, along simple, direct routes. It shows, by the way, many realistic, original qualities. He is the one among the Christian teachers who most completely freed homily from didactic tendencies. In him it became a living address, grave, lofty, eloquent, or familiar and witty. With charming freedom, it passes from a lyric tone to that of conversation. Here it is a satire abounding in piquant, playful allusions and even raillery; there it resembles the friendliest conversation. The demonstration is accompanied by imagery and sentiment that color it in manifold ways. The greatest merit of his oratory is that a truly Christian sentiment warms it in every part.

The final impression which it leaves is rather, it must be confessed, that of admirable improvisation than that of finished art. This is the chief difference between him and the great classic writers. His style, while being clear, animated, exquisite in color, elegant, and rich in images and sallies of wit, has a tendency to diffuseness. His readiness in words makes him too easy with himself. By varying the expression, he seems to vary the thought, but really repeats himself. His composition is like his style. He avoids confusion because his mind is naturally clear and orderly; but the order with which he is content is often superficial and admits extreme liberty in detail. However, these defects should not be too much magnified. If he had had more refined scruples of art, he would, no doubt, considering the taste of the time, have been less natural and sincere. As he is, we may consider him, with Villemain, "the finest genius of the new society grafted upon the ancient world. He is preëminently the Greek become a Christian."<sup>1</sup>

**11. End of Religious Oratory.** — One is really surprised when, after a period of such brilliance, religious oratory comes so quickly to an end.

<sup>1</sup> "Le plus beau génie de la société nouvelle entée sur l'ancien monde. Il est par excellence le Grec devenu chrétien."

We have already given the leading reasons why. After the fourth century, Christian preaching, far from waning, was more and more practised in every part of the Empire. But it had henceforth its ready-made themes, its commonplaces; original invention had less importance in it every day; and the decadence of classical studies was resulting in ever greater neglect of art. We need not give in detail the story of the decadence. In the fifth century there are still found names of famous preachers, Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret. But Cyril was best known as a controversialist and Theodoret as a historian; it would be better to consider them for an instant in those aspects. With this exception, religious oratory disappeared from the Greek world.

**12. Other Christian Writers: Apologists, Scholars, and Historians. —**

We have reserved this type of composition and given it the principal place in our account because in it the literary art of Greece principally manifested its influence on the character of Christianity. The other types are not so easy to distinguish from the history of dogma and that of political events. In them, too, art has a much less important place. Accordingly we shall give them here only a summary review.

We must go back a little to take up, at the beginning of the fourth century, the series of apologists, and to see the series of Christian historians from the beginning. The two series come together and are fused at this time in one man, Eusebius of Cæsarea.<sup>1</sup>

Born in Palestine about 265, a devoted pupil of the scholar Pamphilus whose name he assumed (Εὐσέβιος Παμφίλου, Spiritual Son of Pamphilus), he was bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine from 313 till his death in 340. As such, he found himself forced to take part against his will in the religious disputes of the day. He was naturally a scholar, not a man of action.

His researches in the line of chronology scarcely belong to literature, yet they have a place in literature because of the advantages they secured for it. His great work is his *Chronica*, a general chronology based on a comparison of the dates in Jewish and pagan history. A few fragments of it have come down in Greek; but the whole is known through an Armenian translation and the Latin version of Hieronymous, who continued the chronicle through the period from 325 to 379. It is one of the foundations upon which our knowledge of dates is based for a considerable part of Greek and Roman history.

<sup>1</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* XIX-XXIV; Dindorf, *Historia Ecclesiastica, Præparatio Evangelica, Demonstratio Evangelica*, 4 vols., Leipsic, Teubner, 1867-1871; Schöne, *Chronica*, Berlin, 1875; Heinichen, *Scripta Historica*, 3 vols., Leipsic, 1868-1870.



He discharged still more completely the function of a historian, in the literary sense of the word, by writing his *Church History*. This work we still possess. Its ten books embraced the whole history of Christianity from its beginning to 323, the date of Constantine's victory over Licinius. From the artistic point of view it is mediocre. It has no dramatic representation of events, no study of the movement and progress of thought, no vivid portrayal of character; and the narrative is dry and incoherent. But there is something novel in the idea of considering Christianity as matter of history, and that alone gives the essay a merit which is more than documentary. It rightly won for him the title of Father of Ecclesiastical History.

We shall dismiss his numerous works of exegesis, of which little remains; but his work as an apologist needs emphasis. It is represented by two important and well-preserved treatises, the *Preparation for the Gospel* in fifteen books and the *Demonstration of the Gospel* in twenty. Here, too, he is no writer and no dialectician of much moment. The material of his commentary is made up of passages borrowed from ancient writers as well as from the Sacred Books. The great assemblage of extracts was rather a compilation than a demonstration. He showed little criticism in it. Yet in breadth of view and in wide acquaintance with Hellenism his work excelled that of previous apologists. He was more sympathetic with Greek culture than they, though showing more the influence of the scholars of Alexandria.

After him ecclesiastical history remained in abeyance for some time. But apology and controversy assumed ever greater importance. In the fourth century they appeared chiefly as oratory in the writings of the men we have mentioned. Few others have a place in literary history. We may mention, however, Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386 roughly) for his *Catechism*; and above all, the two representatives of the school of Antioch, Diodorus of Tarsus, who died in 394, and his disciple Theodorus of Mopsueste, who lived from about 350 to 428. In exegesis, the school of Antioch was opposed to that of Alexandria. Against the allegorical interpretation contended for by the latter, it maintained the right of historical interpretation, and manifested, in brief, in matters of faith, an interesting rationalistic tendency, which finally brought it into conflict with orthodoxy. Its last representative in the fourth century is Epiphanius, the sworn enemy of Origen's teachings, and the author of numerous works, among which may be cited the *Treatise against Heresies*, a book that must be consulted for the history of Greek philosophy.

In the fifth century Christian historical writing again came into

favor, though producing no works of value. The task begun by Eusebius made no progress in the hands of his successors. Though honest, estimable, and rather well informed as narrators, and mediocre as writers, they were no more philosophic than he. Great events did not impress them. They saw neither remote causes nor distant consequences. All was reduced in their view to a series of details — problems of dogma and discipline, whose full meaning, in general, they failed to see, and facts without consequence, such as the predominance of certain men and certain parties. The best known in the fifth century were Socrates, whose *Ecclesiastical History*, continuing that of Eusebius, extends to 439;<sup>1</sup> Sozomenos, a younger writer, author of a work of the same title, covering almost the same period;<sup>2</sup> and Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, already mentioned as an orator.<sup>3</sup> His *Ecclesiastical History*, which was composed about 450, treats the same matters as those of Socrates and Sozomenos, but seems independent of both. In the sixth century, among chroniclers of little importance, there is only one name to note, that of Evagrius of Epiphania in Syria (from 536 to about 600). A politician, but a devotee of Christianity, he also composed an *Ecclesiastical History*, extending from 431 to 594; perhaps he has the least merit of all the secondary historians we have just named. He closes the short list. After him the type, which had never been brilliant, is lost in dry and insignificant chronicles.

Exegesis and controversy, however, appealing to more vigorous mental qualities, were better maintained. In the fifth century they were represented by two important men, both of whom we have already named, Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret of Cyrrhus. Cyril was bishop of Alexandria from 412 to 444, and devoted himself most passionately to the religious disputes of his time.<sup>4</sup> In opposing Nestorianism in the fifth century, he played a part which closely recalls that assumed by Athanasius in the fourth in opposing Arianism. But his writings, though very numerous, have greater theological than literary value. We may name simply his *Defence of Christianity against Julian*. Six books, a third of it, are still extant. It contains violent and sometimes malevolent argument, but is logical, learned, always ingenious, especially in attack, and just, notwithstanding some preconceived notions, inasmuch as it does not weaken objections for the sake of triumphing over them. One

<sup>1</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* LXVII; Hussey, *Socrates Scholasticus*, 3 vols., Oxford, 1853.

<sup>2</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* LXVII; Hussey, 3 vols., Oxford, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* LXXX-LXXXIV; Sermond et Garnier, *B. Theodoretii Opera Omnia*, 5 vols., Paris, 1642-1684.

<sup>4</sup> Migne, *Patr. Græc.* LXXVIII-LXXVII.

can reconstruct from it in part the work that it proposed to combat. Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus in northern Syria from 423 to 458, is the last of the great scholars of the oriental church.<sup>1</sup> A pupil in the school of Antioch, he had the tendencies which we have ascribed to that school. We have considered him among the orators and historians of the church; but his reputation is based chiefly on his apologetic and exegetical writings. We shall mention, among his works, only his *Demonstration from Hellenic Philosophy of the Truth of Christian Doctrine* (also called *Therapeutics of Hellenic Maladies*). In it he compares the views of the Greek schools and those of Christianity regarding deep philosophical problems. Neither here nor elsewhere does he seem an original thinker or much of a creator. His merit is principally his method and clearness in the exposition of traditional ideas.

Greek theology survived, without being renewed, through the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. It ended with the work of John of Damascus (eighth century), entitled the *Source of Knowledge*. Summing up, from the point of view of orthodoxy, the scientific and metaphysical knowledge appropriate to the needs of the times, he destroyed both so thoroughly that no further need was felt of contributions to them. It is the time of doom in which the last breath of Hellenic thought was to be given up.

**13. Conclusion.** — The literature which had begun in Greece with the little-known predecessors of Homer thus reached its completion in the cloisters of the Orient about the time when Heraclius became the champion of the Monothelites and saw his empire dismembered by the Arabs. In fact, almost all that remained of the literature after the seventh century was concentrated in the hands of the clergy. No form of thought survived that was not dominated by ecclesiastical moulds. All intellectual movement was circumscribed within the pale of orthodoxy. There was no longer any research, no more free soaring of imagination, no more philosophy or oratory. Hellenism had ceased to exist, and Byzantinism came to take its place.

<sup>1</sup> For bibliography, see foot-note 3, p. 561.

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